

Common Ground in the English Premier League Post-match Interviews

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MA Thesis

English, Degree Programme for Language Specialists

School of Languages and Translation Studies

Faculty of Humanities

University of Turku

February 2020

UNIVERSITY OF TURKU

School of Languages and Translation Studies / Faculty of Humanities

Torkkeli, Akseli: Common Ground in the English Premier League Post-match Interviews

MA Thesis, 53p., 9 app.

English, Degree Programme for Language Specialists

February 2020

This thesis studies common ground and presupposition in English Premier League post-match interviews, in order to examine how the phenomena function in the data. The research questions that address common ground aim at revealing how it is established during the interviews, and moreover, how it is utilized during them. The final research question concerns the functions of presupposition in the data.

The thesis consists of a quantitative study that is conducted by categorizing each interviewer and manager turn in relation to their intended effect on common ground. The data includes 24 interviews and 109 interviewer and manager turns. The categorization model has 3 categories for both participants. In addition to the quantitative study, the current study has a qualitative aspect as well, so that common ground and presupposition can be examined through patterns that occur repeatedly in the data.

The results of the analysis suggest that common ground is established most often through interviewer's assertions that are either accepted or corrected, after which they become common ground. Common ground is visible in smaller units, such as individual propositions, where they serve as shared background information. However, it can have an influence on topicality as well, since managers' avoidance of certain topics is updated into common ground, which affects the rest of the interview. Presuppositions function most often as shared background knowledge that provides a basis for fast and intensive interviews.

In order to gain more precise and systematic information about common ground and presuppositions, it would be crucial to study them in other similar contexts as well. In addition, consulting interviewers could provide insight about customs and participant roles that are present in the interviews.

Key words: common ground, presupposition, sports, sports discourse, discourse study

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List of Abbreviations

- EPL English Premier League
- GM Garry Monk
- BR Brendan Rodgers
- SD Sean Dyche
- MH Mark Hughes
- SCA Socio-cognitive Approach
- IW Interviewer

1 Warmup

Oftentimes, common ground is thought of referring to finding shared opinions during an argument (Cambridge English Dictionary, s.v. “common ground,” n.), or discovering shared history, beliefs, or language that could unite even a nation (Okihiro, 2001). For this thesis, however, common ground refers to mutual beliefs, knowledge and suppositions that two or more people share, and that can be utilized during a conversation (Clarke, 1996, 92-93).

This thesis has three research questions that are the following:

- How common ground is established during the English Premier League post-match interviews.
- How common ground is utilized during the interviews.
- How presupposition functions in the data.

The research questions are addressed primarily with a quantitative study, in order to clarify what means are most frequent in establishing common ground. Furthermore, the quantitative analysis is targeted at revealing how often presuppositions function as hidden agendas, which can be contrasted with the more traditional role of presupposition, where they serve as a background knowledge that the participants take for granted. Both phenomena are investigated in more depth, as I will be presenting instances from the data so that they can be compared to the theories that are introduced in Theoretical framework.

The current study approaches the abovementioned phenomena from sports discourse’s perspective, while aiming to describe the importance of common ground and presupposition in that context. Sports discourse has been studied somewhat little, and although the most recent years have seen an emergence of linguistic studies in the field of sports, there has not yet been much academic dialogue on these matters. There have been some studies on gender in sports discourse, where the data consists of televised football talk shows, for instance, Johnson & Meinhof (1997). File (2018) conducted a case study on how a specific manager handled his image in post-match interviews, and I will utilize his definitions of post-match interview, and manager, in order to explain my own data. The problem, however, is that the previously mentioned studies, although important in their own rights, are not intertwined at all. They provide important knowledge about language in sports discourse, but the scientific dialogue between different researchers is yet to be established, as the studies approach the data from different perspectives.

Personally, I find the lack of studies surprising, since sports related talk-shows and interviews are strictly tied to everyday life, at least in the western societies. Moreover, sports, such as football, basketball and hockey have become economically notable as well. As the game itself reaches more viewers, so does the language. In other words, The English Premier League is a prominent product that is followed globally, yet there is not much knowledge about the discourse that is connected to it. However, the aim of this thesis is not to provide a complete overview of the features of sports discourse, but rather to seek for patterns that are constantly present in the data. Consequently, the current study can be considered as a pilot study that investigates the role of common ground and presupposition in a specific kind of sports interview on a basis of selected data. It is worth noting that similar post-match interviews can be found from many other sports as well, or the scope could be extended to any sports-related short interviews that occur during intermissions, or before, or after the games.

The structure of this thesis is the following: Firstly, key notions, such as the English Premier League, and the managers whose interviews are analyzed, are presented, along with a short introduction on interviews. Theoretical framework consists of different viewpoints on common ground and presupposition, so that the reader is provided with a sufficient amount of knowledge on both matters, and more importantly, one realizes why certain ideas are utilized in the discussion over others. In addition, the decision to base this study on many theories and ideas originates from the desire to compose a framework where different ideas are combined in order to fill the gaps that might otherwise be present. Material section focuses more closely on post-match interviews and the features that distinguish them from other interviews. In the following Methods section, the goal is to rationalize why the analysis is conducted in this manner. Consequently, the following parts of this thesis present the results of the analysis, along with discussion of the key findings.

2 Background

In this section, I will first introduce the English Premier League shortly, after which expectations and the managers involved in the present study are discussed briefly. The aim is to provide some knowledge about the context, as the interviews are so heavily linked with football. Although understanding the results of the study does not depend on one's familiarity with football lexicon, this information is helpful in comprehending the overall dynamics that are present in the interviews. Post-match interviews will be discussed in the Material section, because they have to be covered in more depth.

2.1 English Premier League

English Premier League is arguably the most powerful football league in the world. This claim is based on the attraction that EPL creates. It attracts players, but more importantly, it attracts fans. The interest that the EPL receives is linked to its economically superior position in the world of football (Pifer et al. 2018, 3). The economic growth began in early the 2000's, when EPL teams were able to negotiate more valuable broadcasting rights (Szymanski 2006, 460). In 2018/2019 EPL teams received almost 2.5 billion pounds in price money, the distribution of which ranged from 96 million pounds to 155 million pounds (Richards 2019). The amount of price money depends on how often each team has been broadcasted, and how well they have performed in the league (ibid.). In order to demonstrate the dominant economic position of EPL, it can be compared to Spanish La Liga, where the fourth best team earned 57 million pounds (ibid.). As one can see, the least earning team in EPL gained almost 40 million pounds more than La Liga's forth-runners. In addition to the growth in price money, sponsor deals have become lucrative as well. For instance, in 2014, Manchester United signed a 191 million-pound sponsor deal with Chevrolet that is worth an annual 47 million pounds (Miller & Harris 2014). What has basically happened is that the interest from all around the world has created a more encompassing network. As a consequence, the broadcasts reach more people and therefore the companies consider potential sponsorship deals as excellent marketing opportunities. As there are more companies that are willing to sponsor the teams, the clubs have been able to negotiate better contracts. Having received more money from broadcasting and sponsor deals, the clubs have been able to sign better and more attractive players as well. All the previously mentioned factors have helped EPL in reaching its dominant position.

2.2 The role of manager

Although football organizations consist of many different figures that have varying roles, a manager is perhaps the most important one. According to File (2018, 58), manager's post can be considered as authoritative, meaning that he is the front figure of the club. At the same time, he can be held responsible of the team's performance (ibid.). In order to illustrate the role more precisely, I would like to add that managers are usually in charge of matters that are related to football, such as game tactics. When the club acquires new players, or negotiates contract extensions with current players, managers are in cooperation with the board, but they cannot be held accountable for financial matters. However, depending on the organization's resources and investments, the board always has certain expectations that ought to be fulfilled by the manager. Expectations as such are out of the scope of this thesis, but they have some influence on post-match interviews, and thus, I will discuss them briefly in the following paragraph.

Expectations and the pressure caused by them is a natural aspect in any sports, but since we are concerned with the economically superior EPL, they play even bigger role, as investments and risks tend to be higher. In order to take expectations into account, I will be observing managers with varying resources and goals. Furthermore, the data includes interviews with different results, so that each manager has won, lost and drawn prior to an interview. However, it is important to note that expectations are always context dependent, and they can change during a season, or even during a game. For instance, injuries to key players can often alter expectations for a period of time, which inevitably affects the whole season as well. Consequently, focusing more on expectations would require a much broader description of the context. For the current study, expectations should be seen as one of the factors that influence how the participants approach the interviews, and moreover, why certain linguistic choices are made.

2.3 Managers in the analysis

In this section, I will briefly discuss the managers and the expectations towards their teams, so that the reader is aware of them before reading the analysis. This can be considered as important background knowledge, which provides a framework for approaching any match results. These expectations are based on my expertise on the field of football, but they are related to last season's performances and activity on the transfer market before the season. I have used Transfermarkt.com in gathering the background knowledge about the managers and their teams during 14/15 season.

Note that whenever the interviews are quoted, “IW” stands for the interviewer, and managers are abbreviated by using the initial letters from their first and last names. In addition, the number that follows the abbreviation indicates which interview is being referred to. For instance, “GM1” is the first interview with Garry Monk that was analyzed. (See Appendix 1 for full list of interviews, their codes and URL links.). The managers are chosen based on their performance during 2014/2015 season, so that both ends of the league table are represented. This decision is explained more thoroughly in 2.2.

Garry Monk

2014/2015 was Garry Monk’s first full season as a manager, after serving the final third of 2013/14 season as an interim player-manager (Monk had still an active player contract, but he was appointed as a manager as well). Although Swansea had performed well under Monk in the previous season, no one had expected them to finish 8th in the campaign. There had been some changes in their squad before the season, but the team’s strength stayed quite even. Swansea collected a club record 56 points during the campaign, which was a frequent theme in the interviews as well, since Swansea was safe from relegation, but could not quite reach the top-6 positions. Ultimately, breaking the point record was seen as their only goal during the interviews.

Brendan Rodgers

Brendan Rodgers’s Liverpool had a magnificent season in 2013/2014, and although their number one striker Luis Suarez had departed, Liverpool was expected to challenge for the title after heavy investment on new players. However, Liverpool had a terrible start to a season, and at the time of the interviews, they were chasing a top-4 finish in order to be able to play in the Champions League in the next season. In other words, during the interviews, Liverpool was a team with high stakes.

Sean Dyche

Sean Dyche’s Burnley has traditionally been a club that operates with fairly small resources. They had been promoted to the EPL after 2013/2014, but the squad looked quite weak on paper. There were not big expectations on Burnley before the season, and they spend the majority of the campaign in the relegation zone. Burnley finished 19th and headed back to the lower tier. However, although the results do not show it, the interviews suggest that Burnley played quite well. Sean Dyche mentioned growing into the league and long-term plans, which means that Burnley might have expected to be relegated and that they were not ready to compete in EPL with their resources.

Mark Hughes

Mark Hughes' Stoke City was expected to gain a middle of the pack finish, as they had been 9th the last season and there were not many major changes in the squad. Their season was rather inconsistent throughout, but they managed to finish 9th again, as worse results were often followed by better ones.

2.4 Interview as a setting

In this section, I will briefly describe interview as a genre, in order to define some terms and basic principles that are present in the data. As Delin (2000) mentions, there are various goals and settings that may vary, and thus, interviews cannot be described collectively, so that every claim would hold in every setting. In addition, sports interviews have been studied little, at least when compared to, for instance, political interviews. As a consequence, I will restrict this description to a few principles that are present in my data as well, since there is no point in providing background information that functions in a completely different manner in the current study.

Interview is a setting, where an interviewer tries to extract information from an interviewee, who can represent either himself, or an organization (Delin 2000). Traditionally the interviewer holds more power than the interviewee, as he is claimed to control the agenda of the interview, along with turn-taking (*ibid.*), but as the dynamics of post-match interviews will show, even this can be questioned. However, Delin (*ibid.*) adds that interviewers rarely interrupt interviewees, even if their turns would be long. Delin (2000) distributes the possible outcomes that interviews can have into 4 types that are: 1) neutral outcome, where nothing changes, 2) Scenario where interviewee utilizes the interviewer's expertise, 3) Interviewee gains positive publicity, and 4) Interviewee's public image is harmed by the interview. From these four outcomes, 3 and 4 are most likely to occur after post-match interviews, since it is a setting where the interviewee can rationalize his team's performances.

The talk that occurs in interviews is usually more formal than other conversations, but the degree of formality varies between different interviews (Delin 2000). The participants have roles that are present in interviews, for instance, the interviewer begins and closes the interview (*ibid.*). The structure consists of question and answer pairs that can be complemented with follow-ups (*ibid.*). In other words, sometimes after an answer, there is a follow-up that, for instance, evaluates the response in some way. Finally, the interviewer is usually neutral towards the interviewee, which is why stories or assignments are not visible in interviews.

Bloor & Bloor (2007, 108) argue that interviews serve as an example of a situation where the power relations are unequal, since the interviewer has the right to control topics and

turns. However, Bloor & Bloor (ibid.) use political interviews as an example, and thus, it is evident that the settings are not completely similar. They (ibid.) identified shouting, interrupting, face threats and accusations of not answering the question from the interview that they analyzed. It will be interesting to see, whether the role of the interviewers differ much from the one described by Bloor & Bloor.

3 Theoretical framework

Before defining common ground more explicitly, one should acknowledge the foundations that lie behind it. I will utilize Clark's (1996, 29) concept of joint activities, where the activities are of primary focus, and the language carries a secondary meaning. The purpose of introducing joint activities in such length is that they discuss the participant roles which can be used in describing the interviews that will be analyzed in this paper. Furthermore, in Clark's theory, common ground determines much of what is communicated in any situation. I will introduce a brief definition of common ground to begin with, but more explicit explanations are presented after the sections that concern joint activities. In order to offer a bit different perspective as well, I will explain Stalnaker's view on common ground in 3.4. Presuppositions are partly covered in the sections concerning Stalnaker's ideas, but as they are quite complex and important phenomenon, I have devoted sections 3.4 and 3.4.1 for them as well.

3.1 Joint activities and their goals

According to Clark (1996, 92-93), common ground consists of the mutual beliefs, knowledge and suppositions that two, or more people share. However, it is worth noting that Clark (1996) understands communication as a by-product of joint activities, which are explained in the following sections.

Joint activities are any culturally recognized, goal-oriented situations that involve one or more participants (Clark 1996, 29). According to Clark (*ibid.*) language and joint activities cannot be separated, because communication enables us to engage in different activities. As this thesis focuses on common ground, only activities that include two or more participants are relevant. Joint activities occur due to some dominant goal that some of the participants have, and consequently, other participants may join the activity (Clark 1996, 34). Goals shape much of what takes place during a given situation (*ibid.*). Furthermore, sometimes the goals may be ambiguous, or they might become more explicit, or change during an activity (*ibid.*). Clark (*ibid.*) mentions a "gossip session" as an example of a situation, where there might not be an explicit goal to start with.

In addition to the dominant goal that can be understood as the motivation for doing something, joint activities include smaller goals that are fulfilled as the activity proceeds (Clark 1996, 36). Moreover, these smaller phases, as Clark (*ibid.*) calls them, are often joint activities in their own rights as well. For instance, eating in a restaurant can be considered as a joint activity that consists of smaller phases, such as being led to a table, being offered menus,

choosing a dish and then communicating that to the waiter, and so on. The dominant goal is to eat in a restaurant, but in order to complete it, many smaller goals ought to be fulfilled. Note that the dominant goal may be connected to other goals, such as relaxing, tasting something new or exotic, or enjoying the company of some other person. Nonetheless, joint activities proceed hierarchically and in order to complete the activity, certain phases should be fulfilled along the way (Clark 1996, 37-38). For instance, one cannot be provided with a dinner in a restaurant, unless one has communicated their choice to the waiter.

3.1.2 Participant roles

According to Clark (1996, 34) each participant has their own role in fulfilling the dominant goal. As an example, “guide A led tourists B, C and D to Eiffel Tower” (ibid.), shows that B, C and D had a dominant goal to find a way to Eiffel Tower, whereas A participated in that activity as a guide. In other words, although the participants share a goal, their roles carry a different set of actions and responsibilities (ibid.). Importantly, the participants have often more than one goal, thus, Clark (1996, 34) makes the distinction between domain goal (the dominant goal), procedural goals, interpersonal goals and private agendas. Procedural goals are connected to the domain goal, as they involve aspects such as, how to do X, or how to do X efficiently (ibid). Interpersonal goals are linked to relationships with other people, for instance, how we can impress them, while being polite and upholding our self-respect (ibid.). Private agendas are personal goals that are sometimes in controversy with the public goals, and therefore, it is in the participant’s best interest to keep them private. Clark (1996, 35) argues that joint activities require public information and the participants should know what they are participating in, although that may not be stated explicitly. In other words, an activity cannot be joint, unless all members recognize what they are doing. Moreover, the dominant goal should be shared (and thus public information), even though the members might have varying private goals that determine why they decide to contribute (ibid.).

Clark (1996, 36) mentions that joint activities cannot be completed unless both participants share beliefs about the activity in question. In other words, it is not enough that one believes that he is engaged in an activity, as he must believe that the other participant(s) is doing the same, and vice versa (ibid.). I return once more to my example about dining in a restaurant. There is no point in ordering food, if one does not believe that the waiter will communicate that information further. Due to participant roles, however, the same behavior is not necessarily applicable to the waiter, because he is obliged to ask whether the customer would like to order

something, even though he would not believe that they will order anything at all. Similarly, participant roles are likely to have an impact on the data of the current study as well.

3.1.3 Common ground in joint activities

I have discussed so far how joint activities are constructed, how they proceed, and are ultimately completed. This, however, is a simplified picture of a more complicated phenomenon. Clark (1996, 38) argues that joint activities are cumulative, which is not by any means surprising, as I have already discussed how goals are shaped during an activity, and how activities proceed in phases in order to be completed. But according to Clark (*ibid.*), it is the common ground in an activity that cumulates, meaning that the participants learn to know what they share about the activity. Those attributes include beliefs, knowledge and different kind of suppositions (*ibid.*).

Clark (1996, 40) compares the accumulation of common ground to a game chess, where every move creates a new situation, or state of activity, as he calls them. Instead of replacing the previous situation, a new move should be seen as an increment that adds to the common ground (*ibid.*). Similarly, in a communicative event, new speech acts do not remove the older ones, but are rather attached to them. In Clark's (*ibid.*) chess game, the starting point is SA0 (SA= state of activity), and the situation after the first move is SA1, and so on. This way, one can understand how common ground is incremented, as the current state of activity contains traces of the previous ones. A more concrete example of an activity could be a post-match interview that serves as the data in this paper. Every turn can be seen as a new state of activity that increments to the previous turns. Clark (*ibid.*) summarizes the accumulation of common ground well, by saying that SA_i is the cumulative result of the first *i* moves of the game.

Clark (1996, 43) has divided common ground in any situation into three categories, which are initial common ground, current state of the joint activity, and public events so far. However, I think that this division is not the most suitable one, mainly because initial common ground and public events so far are partially overlapping, since according to Clark (*ibid.*) the former includes background knowledge, and the latter public events that have caused the current state. Personally, I think that the public events that have incremented to the current state are indeed background knowledge, since the information is public. The approach provided by Kecskes & Zhang (2013) seems more appropriate, as it acknowledges the possibility of individual variance that seems absent from Clark's theory.

3.2 The Socio-cognitive view of communication

Kecskes & Zhang (2013, 378) support a more dynamic view of common ground, which approaches not only communication from a different angle, but the whole connection between

an individual and society is more dynamic. The Socio-cognitive view stresses individualism and the unique nature of each participant (ibid.). Basically, I would argue that this can be compared to what Clark (1996, 32-35) said about participant roles and goals, although the Socio-cognitive approach (hereafter SCA) gives even more freedom to individuals, instead of tying them into different roles that bear certain responsibilities. According to Kecskes & Zhang (2013, 378) individual and social traits are in an interchanging relationship, where individuals are capable of shaping the society as well. Table 1 (Kecskes & Zhang 2013, 379) illustrates this relationship.

Table 1 Individual and social traits

Individual trait	Social trait
Prior experience	Actual situational experience
Salience	Relevance
Egocentrism	Cooperation
Attention	Intention

What this means, is that prior experience creates salience, which leads to egocentrism that steers our attention. In the social side, actual situational experience influences relevance, which governs cooperation, and finally, intention is a cooperation-driven practice (Kecskes & Zhang 2013, 379). Meanwhile individual, as well as social traits are connected inside their domains, they influence each other as well. Kecskes & Zhang (ibid.) formulate this as following:

“Communication is the result of interplay of intention and attention motivated by sociocultural background that is privatized / subjectivized by the individuals in their linguistic behavior. The background is composed of knowledge of interlocutors deriving from their private prior experience and current situational experience that are both socio-cultural in nature”

This quote captures well the philosophy that is visible in SCA. Moreover, it explains the many variables that influence each individual in their communication.

Kecskes & Zhang (2013, 378) accuse previous theories concerning common ground of being too static, and assuming that cooperation is a constant variable in every communicative event. As a solution, they (ibid.) suggest that speaker and hearer should both be seen as equal participants, who use their most salient and accessible knowledge in their private contexts in order to produce and comprehend. This might be the biggest difference to Clark’s theory, as he often refers to public knowledge. However, he seems to forget the fact that different conclusions

can be drawn from public information as well. Hence, the concept of private context is very useful, as it takes into account the sphere of different individuals who make differing conclusions. Kecskes & Zhang (ibid.) highlight this point by stating that accurate interpretation requires an analysis that examines both participants as individuals with different abilities, and possibly with distinct understanding of the same core common ground information.

3.2.1 Common ground in SCA

The previous section shows the more dynamic starting point of SCA, but in addition, it rationalizes the different view of common ground as well. Kecskes & Zhang (2013, 378-80) have divided common ground into core common ground and emergent common ground. The former refers to more static, generalized knowledge that is connected to a certain speech community, via interaction and experience (ibid.). The latter, on the other side, is by nature more dynamic and accessible to an individual(s) through co-constructed communication. Basically, we could make the distinction between public knowledge of a speech community, and private knowledge of an individual in Clark's terms, but it still does not cover the aspect of dynamic and static nature. The basic idea of common ground in SCA is that it can be old knowledge that is activated from memory, shared knowledge that can be sought and maintained, or new knowledge that is created in the course of a conversation (Kecskes & Zhang 2013, 380).

3.2.1.1 Core common ground

Although the more static of the two types of common ground, core common ground can change as well. Kecskes & Zhang (2013, 380) mention diachronic change, that occurs slowly as the world around us changes. They (ibid.) mention the term ATM as an example of this change. 30 years ago, ATM would not have made much sense in a conversation, but today, automatic teller machine is part of core common ground in many speech communities. Another important factor about core common ground is that it can vary inside a speech community, depending on age or geography for instance (ibid.).

3.2.1.2 Emergent common ground

Emergent common ground can be created during a conversation, but it is often linked to core common ground (Kecskes & Zhang 2013, 381). This can occur in at least two ways, as knowledge that is based on core common ground can be used or altered in a manner that makes it emergent common ground (ibid.). On the other hand, core common ground may have an influence on emerging common ground, and thus, it can be seen as a restricting force. This works the other way as well, since instances of emergent common ground can be traced back

to knowledge that belongs to core common ground (ibid.). The relationship between core and emergent common ground is illustrated well in example (1) by Kecskes & Zhang (2013, 381).

- (1) **Jill:** I met someone today.
Jane: Good for you.
Jill: He is a police officer.
Jane: Are you in trouble?
Jill: Oh, no...

Kecskes & Zhang (2013, 381) explain that relying solely on core common ground would result in a wrong interpretation of the situation. Policeman, more often than not, refers to some kind of trouble, and thus, Jane's initial conclusion is that Jill is having some problems with the police. But Jill's more privatized knowledge is that the encounter was positive, and there might even have been something romantic about the meeting. Although the short insert does not reveal completely how the meeting went, the fact that the meeting was positive will enter Jill and Jane's emergent common ground (ibid.). I would also add to the explanation that in their core common ground, Jane and Jill already share that Jill is single, as otherwise Jane would not have responded "good for you".

3.3 Definition of presupposition

For the sake of clarity, it is important to present a definition of presupposition, before I start to discuss the many theories concerning it. Most of the books assume that the reader knows what presupposition is, and thus, the term itself is not explained. However, I want to provide a more comprehensible starting point in order to be able to support the analysis as well.

Presupposition means that the speaker takes something for granted. In other words, certain information is presupposed (Beaver & Geurts 2019, 494). Furthermore, this is visible in the way that speakers construct their sentences, as information that is taken for granted is rather marked linguistically than stated explicitly in the main content of sentence (ibid.). So, instead of saying something obvious directly, speakers use presupposition triggers that carry the intended meaning (ibid.), as in the following examples (Beaver & Geurts 2019, 496)

- (2) China has stopped stockpiling metals.
(3) I have written to every headmaster in Rochdale.

Example 2 presupposes that China used to stockpile metals. Here stopped is a presupposition trigger, which carries the presupposed information. We could also formulate the sentence as China used to stockpile metals, but now they have stopped, but as one can see, example 2 is shorter, and thus it can be considered as more efficient. Finally, the third example presupposes

that there are (many) headmasters in Rochdale (ibid.). By comparing the examples, one can see that the presupposition triggers function in various ways. For instance, quantifiers, such as every create different presuppositions than aspectual verbs, such as stopped (ibid.). Beaver & Geurts (along with many others) have included a longer list of presupposition triggers (see Beaver & Geurts 2019, 496 for more information).

3.4 Stalnakerian view on common ground

Stalnaker offers to a large part different view on common ground than Clark or Kecskes & Zhang. Whereas joint activities are concrete and easy to understand, Stalnaker's theory is more concerned with presuppositions and different kind of formulas that may seem abstract. In addition to offering a different stance on common ground, Stalnaker's theories have been influential on the research of common ground and presupposition (see eg. Kecskes & Zhang 2013).

Stalnaker (2002, 701) claims that the notion of common ground was first introduced in this sense by Paul Grice in 1989. Grice (1989, 65) uses common ground in discussing agreement and (partial) disagreement that some propositions create for the participants. In a summary, Grice argues that the part of the proposition that is agreed on falls to the participants' common ground, whereas the part that causes disagreement does not do so. Based on Grice's earlier ideas, Stalnaker (2002, 701) treats common ground as: "presumed background information shared by participants in a conversation". Grice and Stalnaker seem to approach common ground from a linguistic point of view, whereas Clark understands language as a device for successful communication during activities, and thus, the approach is more pragmatic.

The importance that Stalnaker (2001, 701) has devoted to presupposition can be justified by his claim that people presuppose (or act that they presuppose) something, only if they believe that others do so as well. Stalnaker's view of common ground consists of mutual presuppositions that establish the common ground between the participants. Although common ground itself is quite simple concept, there are different limitations to it. For instance, according to Stalnaker (2001, 704) 1) Proposition X must be believed by all participants, and 2) all participants must believe that all participants believe that all believe, and so on. This requirement creates a complex web of limitations that ought to be taken into account.

Stalnaker (2002, 704), however, notes that speaker presuppositions are not automatically similar to what is mutually known or believed. Basically, this enables two different scenarios, in which common ground has a varying role. In short, in case the speaker has no undeniable proof about the common ground, he can assume it. It is worth noting that the

assumption can be visible in the main contents of the sentence, or it can be a presupposition. The main point, however, is that the speaker is not sure, whether the proposition falls within the participants' common ground. Thus, common ground may, or may not be established, and similarly, the effect can be either permanent, or only temporal in case the proposition, or presupposition, is rejected (Stalnaker 2002, 704-6). In the other scenario, common ground is a mutual pretense, where the speaker presuppositions and actual beliefs about common ground do not correspond to each other. Stalnaker (*ibid.*) compares this to the flouting of Gricean maxims, where it is evident to both participants that the uttered sentence means something else than what it implies. However, I would like to suggest that this phenomenon might not be restricted to only presuppositions, as whole conversations can be based on pretense common ground. Consider example 4:

(4) A: Sorry about this mess, I did not have time to clean up.

B: It is not that bad.

If this conversation is between two spouses, one could argue that both participants know that the mess is indeed bad, but due to politeness, for instance, B's response creates a false common ground, where the situation is not that bad. Yet, the whole conversation has nothing to do with speaker presupposition.

3.4.1 Critique on Stalnakerian view

Personally, I find distracting the somewhat arbitrary use of a few notions. For instance, in some parts, common ground and common belief are used in an interchanging manner, but the reader is still tempted to think that there is a slight difference in meaning. Abbott (2008) tackles more fundamental problems in the common ground view. Abbott's (2008, 523-526) focus is primarily on the fact that according to Stalnaker (2002, 704): "Common ground is just common or mutual belief, and what a speaker presupposes is what she believes to be common or mutual belief." This, according to Abbott (2008, 525) limits the use of definite noun phrases. For example, the following dialogue posits a problem for the common ground view.

(5) A: Are you going to lunch?

B: No, I've got to pick up my sister.

According to the common ground view, a sentence like this can be used only in circumstances where participant A knows that B has a sister (*ibid.*). In case A does not know that B has a sister, B should not presuppose that she has a sister, because the belief is not common. It is evident that this kind of logic does not apply to conversations, but it is derived clearly from

Stalnaker's (2002, 704) definition of common ground. However, Stalnaker (2002, 708-9) mentions that when a speech act produces new information, its obvious consequences become a part of common beliefs in a process in which they are connected to the earlier mutual beliefs. Stalnaker (*ibid.*) discusses the abovementioned example (5) as well, but his conclusions are somewhat unclear, as he states that in a normal situation it is likely that A will add to their common ground that B has a sister, but there are numerous other situations where this might not happen.

Abbott (2008, 530) argues that utterances which contain presuppositions that are not in the participant's common ground are frequent, an example of that can be found from newspapers, for instance. Stalnaker (2002, 710), on the other hand mentions that depending on the contents of the proposition and context, speakers have to make a distinction between including certain facts as presuppositions that remain more as a background information, or stating them directly, which means that those facts will receive a more central position in the sentence. However, it does not answer to the question that example 1 creates for Stalnaker's definition of common ground.

3.5 Theories concerning presupposition

As presupposition has already been discussed to some extent in the sections concerning common ground, it is natural to focus extensively on it now. It is evident that presupposition is an important aspect of common ground, and due to its complicated nature, I feel an urge to discuss it more in length. I will begin with Levinson's summary of the developments in the study of presupposition, but before that, I want to highlight the difference between the actual study of presupposition, and the scope of this paper. The aim of this thesis is not to study presupposition as a linguistic feature, but to observe the role it occupies in the data. As a consequence, I will not present the formulas that are used in explaining presupposition, as that would reduce the space that will be dedicated to different examples, which enhance one's understanding of presupposition as a concrete, rather than abstract phenomenon.

3.5.1 Semantic theories

According to Levinson (1983, 167) presupposition was discussed frequently in linguistics during the late 1960s and mid-70s. The reason being that the then prevailing linguistic theories could not quite explain the unstable and varying nature of presupposition (*ibid.*). The studies on presupposition originated from research on reference and referring expressions (Levinson 1983, 196). Pioneers on this area, such as Frege (1892) and Russell (1905) focused on deriving logical forms and building formulas that could explain presupposition (Levinson 1983, 169-

171). The sentence “Kepler died in misery”, contains an entailment “Kepler died in misery”, but it also presupposes that the name Kepler designates something, in this case, Kepler refers to a person. What is important about Frege’s theory, is the observation that presuppositions often survive negation, whereas entailments do not. For instance, Kepler did not die in misery, still presupposes that the name Kepler designates something, although the entailment is different (Levinson 1983, 178).

The semantic theories were fundamentally based on either truth values or attempts to translate all sentences into atomic concepts (Levinson 1983, 176, 199). The principle for semantic theories is that “If p semantically presupposes q, then p always semantically presupposes q”, but Levinson (1983, 200) gives multiple examples of this not being the case. The reason for that is defeasibility, which means that in certain contexts, presuppositions can disperse. Levinson (1983, 187) gives a few examples that are introduced below.

(6) Sue cried before she finished her thesis.

(7) Sue finished her thesis.

(8) Sue died before she finished her thesis.

As Levinson (ibid.) explains, example (6) presupposes (7), whereas (8) does not presuppose (7). One’s background knowledge of the world allows the interpretation that the thesis cannot be completed after death, although presuppositions concerning before-clauses generally tend to hold (ibid.).

Another difficulty in understanding presupposition is called the projection problem, which is associated with the behavior of presuppositions in complex sentences (Levinson 1983, 191). In a nutshell, presuppositions sometimes survive in contexts where entailments do not, but on the other hand, presuppositions sometimes evaporate in contexts where entailments do not (ibid.). I will use Levinson’s (1983, 193) examples again in order to illustrate this.

(9) The two thieves were caught again last night.

(10) A thief was caught last night.

(11) The two thieves had been caught before.

Here (9) entails (10) and presupposes (11), but if we add a conditional, as in (12) the situation changes.

- (12) If the two thieves were caught again last night, P.C Katch will get an honourable mention.

Sentence (12) does not entail (10), but it still presupposes (11) (ibid.). When it comes to the situations where presuppositions do not survive, I have simplified Levinson's (1983, 195) examples in order to show how the context changes when the if-clause is inserted.

- (13) John did not cheat again.
(14) John had cheated before.
(15) John did not cheat again, if he indeed ever did.

Here we see that (13) presupposes (14), but (15) does not. In (15) the speaker suspends his full commitment to the presupposition in (14) (ibid.). In short, defeasibility and the projection problem are factors that effectively rule out the semantic theories of presupposition. Furthermore, there have been numerous attempts to include these peculiarities into the formulas, but more often than not, there seem to emerge counterexamples that diverge from the suggested logic (see Levinson 1983, 195-196).

3.5.2 Pragmatic theories

So far, the conclusion is that semantic theories cannot explain presupposition in a satisfactory manner. However, according to Levinson (1983, 225) that is the case for pragmatic theories as well. Earlier pragmatic theories were based on appropriateness, or mutual knowledge (Levinson 1983, 205), which creates clauses such as "An utterance A pragmatically presupposes a proposition B iff A is appropriate only if B is mutually known by participants". However, this brings us to the same critique that was directed to Stalnaker's views in 3.4, as utterances such as (16) would be inappropriate, in case the addressee does not know that the speaker has a car.

- (16) I'm sorry I'm late, I'm afraid my car broke down.
(17) The speaker has a car.

In other words, (16) would not presuppose (17) unless the addressee is aware of the speaker having a car. But as Gazdar (1979, 105) explains, the speaker having a car can be derived from the context, and so presupposed as well. If the speaker would have said that his fire-motor broke down instead of his car, the interpretation would be different, because one knows that the speaker is unlikely to possess a fire-motor (ibid.). This contradiction shows how our knowledge

of the world allows some presuppositions, whereas some other information cannot be presupposed. As a consequence, Gazdar's (1979) definition, "the speaker knows that p" or, "it is consistent with all that the speaker knows that p" is credited as the most suitable theory so far by Levinson (1983, 212-216).

Levinson (*ibid.*) concludes that a theory on presupposition must acknowledge that presupposition is a complicated concept, which has both semantic and pragmatic properties, and therefore a successful theory should utilize both branches. He also suggests that some of the phenomena that have been previously labeled as presupposition, could be reduced to concern only semantics so that the group of presupposition could be made into a more compact one (*ibid.*).

The reason for relying so strongly on Levinson's overview is partly, because his distinction between different theories is clear, but also because there have not been that many notable new developments in the field. When reading the overview by Beaver & Geurts (2019) the only considerable new theory seems to be the Satisfaction theories, while all the other mentioned theories are more or less covered by Levinson (1983). Beaver & Geurts (2019, 512-513) describe the Satisfaction theories as more dynamic than previous theories, as new assertions expand the context, to which the participants are committed. Consequently, new information allows the expansion of context for future utterances as well (*ibid.*). However, these ideas are visible Stalnaker's (2002, 708-9) definition of manifest events as well.

3.6 Presupposition accommodation

According to Beaver & Geurts (2019, 518) presupposition accommodation has been one of the most common topics in the research concerning presupposition. It means that in case an utterance needs presupposition x in order to be acceptable, presupposition x is generated once the utterance is said, unless it receives objection (Lewis 1979, 347). The process resembles much what Stalnaker (2002, 708-9) said about speech acts being manifest events, where, depending on the contents and context, new information may become part of the participants' common ground. Unlike Stalnaker (*ibid.*), Lewis (1979) has created a more specific set of rules that govern the accommodation process. I will introduce the rules briefly, but once again, I will not present the formulas.

3.6.1 The rules of presupposition accommodation

As mentioned above, there are a few prevailing conditions that ought to be present when presupposition accommodation occurs. One must note that presupposition accommodation concerns situations, such as in example (5), where it is not clear to all the participants that B

has a sister, meaning that it is not in their common ground. Lewis (1979, 348) raises salience as the first important aspect of accommodation. He (ibid.) argues that X does not have to be the only X in a given situation, but instead, it has to be the most salient X in the domain of discourse. I have decided to invent simple examples that are by content similar to what Lewis (1979) has used, but thematically more equivalent to my data.

(18) **Interviewer:** How did you see the match?

Manager: It was odd in many ways.

Here, “the match” refers to the match that has just been played, and there is no reason to believe that it would refer to any other match, and thus, it is the most salient one. In the same manner, Lewis (1979, 349) suggests that there is a salience ranking, which determines who or what is referred to, and consequently participants can make the right interpretations that make the utterances acceptable. Consider example (19), as there is more than one match that can be referred to:

(19) **Interviewer:** We’ve received surprising results from many grounds during this fixture. What are your initial feelings after the match?

Manager: It was a stunning performance, and I am very glad.

Here “results from many grounds during this fixture”, refers to more than one match, yet “the match” refers to the one where the manager in question was involved in. Thus, it is the most salient one in the eyes of both participants. Lewis (1979, 349) adds that if some utterance requires X to be more salient than Y in order to be acceptable, X will become more salient than Y once the utterance has been said. This happens in example (19) as well, “as results from many grounds during this fixture” does not make any match more salient than others, but once “what are your initial feelings after the match” has been said, the focus shifts automatically to a specific match, where the manager was involved in.

Another important aspect that Lewis (1979, 352) discusses, is vagueness, and its relationship to something being true, or true enough, as he formulates it. Lewis (ibid.) argues that truth values are linked to delineations, meaning that whether we consider something to be true or false depends on how we draw the line. Moreover, this raises the issue of something being “true for the most part”, “true enough”, or “not entirely true” (ibid.). Lewis (ibid.) notes that the concept of vagueness is hard to explain thoroughly, because delineations of what is true are often ambiguous. However, he mentions that vagueness is very much context-dependent, which means that something might be considered as true enough in one occasion, but not on the other (ibid.). He calls these precision standards, which vary from conversation to

conversation, but they can also be adjusted during a conversation, of which I will present a brief example.

(20) **Interviewer:** You played very well today, any comments?

Manager: Yes, indeed. It is a shame we lost with that kind of performance.

Interviewer: Your opponent was really on fire, do you think they can be stopped?

Manager: It is going to be a hell of a task for any team.

Example (20) contains raising the standards of precision. The interview starts with a low standard, as a team that has lost the game is being praised for their performance, and moreover, this praise is being accepted by the manager. This implies that “you played very well” falls within the delineation of being true in this case. But interviewer’s second comment raises the standard, as the opposing team has played even better, so well that the participants are wondering whether anyone can challenge them. Lewis (1979, 353) discusses conversations like this one as well, and he concludes that something that has been considered as true with lower standards, remains to be true in that context, even though the standards would be raised later.

3.7 SCA on presupposition

When considering presupposition and its relationship with common ground, SCA once again divides itself from more traditional perspectives. The problem of presupposing something that is not in the participant’s common ground has been discussed many times in this thesis and basically, it is what Stalnaker’s common ground theory is mostly criticized for (see 3.4.1 for critique on Stalnakerian view). SCA, however, seems to be able to tackle this problem quite well by relying on the cooperation of speaker and hearer (Kecskes & Zhang 2013, 382). Kecskes & Zhang (ibid.) argue that presupposition resembles a contract, as it is first proposed by the speaker, and then the hearer will respond. In case the hearer accepts the presupposition, it becomes common ground, and in case he is either not sure about it, or doubts it, it is unsure whether the presupposition will become common ground. This definition stresses the dynamism of presupposition, as was the case for common ground as well. Kecskes & Zhang (2013, 382-383) highlight the fact that presupposition is caused by speaker propositional attitudes and communicative interests, instead of truth values or common ground status of some proposition. Although, I believe that this statement is a bit vague, as one could argue that every linguistic feature is in one way or another caused by those two desires. It is worth noting as well that presupposition should be understood as a component of speech acts, instead of a major force that has the most effect on common ground, as one could interpret based on Stalnaker’s (2002) view.

3.8 Refusing common ground

It is surprising that although many authors (such as Kecskes & Zhang, or Stalnaker) have stated that propositions may not become part of common ground, or in other words, the other participant might refuse the proposition, this phenomenon is not discussed any further. Before proceeding to the analysis, I will introduce a brief overview to what happens, when common ground is not accepted, at least in a proposed manner.

Asher & Gillies (2003) discuss the abovementioned situations from the perspective of discourse interpretation. Instead of adopting their framework to a larger extent, I would like to present a few key terms from their work, such as settledness and corrections (Asher & Gillies 2003, 483). Settled information is basically a synonym for information that has been accepted to the participants' common ground. But this section is concerned with information that is not settled, at least initially. Thus, speakers make corrections, so that the information could become settled. As in SCA, this approach takes into account the dynamism that is present in conversations. The following dialogue illustrates it well:

- (21) A: Who went to work yesterday?
 B: C did.
 A: No she didn't; I talked to her. (Asher & Gillies 2003, 489).

Here B replies to A's question. For B, his reply is truth and thus, settled information. But for A, it is unsettled information, as he knows that C did not work on the day in question. Consequently, A makes a correction. From there, the conversation could proceed in many ways. For example, B could accept the correction, which would make A's statement settled information. Or B could make a new correction, which could then become settled, or remain unsettled (Asher & Gillies 2003, 489). In order to see what will eventually become common ground, one would have to investigate what follows in the conversations.

3.9 Assertion

A great deal of this section has been concerned with presupposition, in order to provide the reader with a decent understanding of the phenomenon. If matters are simplified, presupposition refers to information that is taken for granted, meaning that it is not worth mentioning in the sentence, because it falls to the common ground anyway. Assertions, then again, are utterances that convey information, and thus, their relation to common ground is different. I will cover assertions rather briefly, as they are present in the categorization model as well (see 4.3.1). Soames (2008, 252) describes assertions and common ground through the following example:

(22) Carl Hempel lived on Lake Lane in Princeton. (Soames 2008, 252).

Basically, the sentence is self-explanatory, yet it means different things to different people, which brings us to common ground (*ibid.*). Soames (*ibid.*) explains that someone who is familiar with philosophy recognizes that Carl Hempel was a philosopher, whereas someone else might only recognize that the utterance is about someone, who used to live in Lake Lane, or in case that person is not familiar with Lake Lane, it might be about someone who lived somewhere. All in all, assertions are utterances that should be interpreted as their literal meaning suggests, at least in normal contexts (*ibid.*). I will soon return to the role of context, but first I will further clarify the relationship between assertion and presupposition. If we examine presuppositions in example (22), we will see that it presupposes at least that a person called Carl Hempel existed, and furthermore, that he does not live in Lake Lane anymore. The example does not tell that he died in 1997, so one could as well assume that he is living in somewhere else at the time the utterance was spoken. In order to dedicate space for some information, other information is presupposed, and thus not stated explicitly.

Stalnaker (1978, 78) described assertions in a similar way over 40 years ago. In his (*ibid.*) theory, assertions are made in context, which means that there is a situation, where all participants have their own beliefs and intentions. Thus, assertions might have differing meanings to different participants, as was suggested in the previous paragraph. Moreover, sometimes the propositions depend on context, and sometimes their intention is to change the context (*ibid.*). In general, this view supports the dynamic nature of conversation that has been adopted for my thesis as well.

4 Material and Methods

In this section, I will introduce the data and the methodology in more length, in order to justify the decisions that are related to data selection and processing, for instance. After that, the methods are examined more closely, so that the reader is familiarized with the categorization system, and the principles that lie behind it.

4.1 Post-match Interviews

Post-match interviews consist of an interviewer and a manager, and they occur straight after a match has been finished. The aim of the interviews is to reveal the manager's initial comments to the audience, but as File (2018, 56) mentions, managers' abilities to perform their work successfully can be evaluated based on their comments in post-match interviews. Thus, managers have to express not only reasonable opinions, but they ought to be uttered in certain manner as well (ibid.). This entails critical assessment of the events, and a correct reaction to the result. Post-match interviews are only 2 to 3-minute long, mainly because the managers are in a rush to give feedback to their players. The length of the interviews highlights the importance of common ground and different suppositions, which makes them an interest target of research. The interviews are filmed from a close range, and the camera is locked on the manager. The interviewer does not appear on the screen and often remains anonymous.

However, post-match interviews have been recently replaced to a large extent by post-match conferences, where multiple journalists can ask questions. This reduces the dialogue element, because utterances become increasingly unattached as the person asking questions changes constantly. There are other technical matters as well, since the new conferences are longer and thus the number of interviews that could be studied is smaller. Finally, the conferences are quite noisy, and they are broadcasted from a different angle. This makes hearing more difficult, and it would raise the risk of mistakes in the analysis.

Furthermore, many of the current EPL managers are not competent in English, and thus, they use interpreters. I believe that this reduces, or at least modifies the common ground as well, and they should be studied by someone who understands the original and translated messages. Based on these facts, I have decided to analyze the older interviews. In addition, I will observe only British managers for two reasons: They are likely to have more accurate understanding of the questions, which is an important aspect, because as my theoretical framework shows, presupposition is a complex phenomenon. Considering this as well,

analyzing interviews from 2014/2015 season suits the purposes of this paper perfectly, as more Britons were leading the top clubs during that season.

4.2 Data

In this section, I will briefly explain how the data was chosen, collected and processed. As mentioned above, I had to analyze interviews from 2014/2015 season due to multiple reasons. This had an effect on data selection as well, since BBC does not have archive for match recaps that are older than 12 months, and thus, I could not access the interviews through BBC's own site. Before selecting specific managers, I ran a few searches on different video-sharing platforms, in order to see how many post-match interviews are available from that season and what managers feature in them. Luckily, a Youtube user called Zak R (see Appendix 1 for references) had posted several interviews that matched the timetable, and moreover, the videos included managers from both ends of the league table (see 2.3 for more information on the managers).

The data consists of 24 short interviews, of which each manager is present in 6. The interviews are 2-3-minute long, but the number of turns is more important than length, since I am analyzing the relation between each turn and common ground. The number of turns that each participant has in a single interview varies between 3 and 6, but the overall number of turns per participant in each manager's interview is between 26 and 29, which means that the samples are fairly close to each other.

I conducted the analysis in Microsoft Excel, by creating a sheet that had columns for different categories, notes, and match and source information, and rows for different interviews. This way, the tokens were easy to mark once they occurred, and after the analysis, the overall frequency of each category could be counted via Excel. I also had separate sheets for wins, losses and draws, so that the frequency of each category could be examined more closely, and the overall number of tokens was easy to calculate. As the analysis was done in Excel, I did not transcribe anything at that stage, but I made notes about the contents, such as "much acceptance", "slight correcting", "or clear case of hidden agenda", so that those interviews were easy to find afterwards. Transcribing was done when different examples were utilized in order to show, for instance how common ground was established during the interviews.

4.3 Methodology

The research questions, 1) how common ground is established during the interviews, 2) how common ground is utilized in the interviews, and 3) how presupposition functions in the data, are addressed in the following way: a quantitative analysis attempts to answer the first question

directly, and moreover, it reveals whether presupposition functions as a hidden agenda as well. The analysis is based on close examination of each turn in the videos, so that the turns can be classified according to the categorization model (see 4.3.1). Interviewer and manager turns are classified separately, because the participants have different roles that require different actions. The second research question is more qualitative, and it is addressed by collecting and presenting extracts that show how common ground is visible during the interviews. In a similar fashion, I will introduce examples of presuppositions, so that the third research question can be answered in a satisfactory manner. The extracts are located and chosen based on the comments and notes on the Excel, as I marked interesting features for the qualitative study while conducting the quantitative one. In addition, I tried to include extracts from as many interviews as possible, so that the reader would realize that common ground is present in all interviews in one way or another. Finally, it can be argued that the qualitative study has more credibility when the patterns are present in more interviews.

4.3.1 Categorization model

I have decided to categorize two aspects from the interviews: first, type of questions asked by the interviewer, and second, type of responses by the manager. Although the participants are observed separately, the relation between interviewer and manager categories will reveal much about the rules, dynamics, and general principles that are present in post-match interviews. I will first introduce the categories that concern the interviewers, and respectively, the ones for the managers. Since there is not an existing categorization model for this kind of study, I had to create one. The classification is based on the literature about common ground that has been introduced in the Theoretical Framework. Most importantly, how common ground can be sought or activated (see 3.5), and how some propositions may be accepted to common ground as such, or through correcting (more detail in 3.11). Equally important weight carries a smaller scale pilot study that I conducted in order to test a few important issues before beginning the actual analysis. In short, I wanted to find out whether this kind of study can be made with post-match interviews, what kind of categories should be present, and whether there is enough accessible data. Once I was certain that there is enough data available, I analyzed five randomly selected interviews from 2014/2015 season. The biggest advantages of the pilot study were that I realized what kind of information should be documented into the Excel sheets, and even more importantly, that this kind of study is manageable with post-match interviews as the data. Finally, during the pilot study, it became evident that corrections are favored over rejections, which I will return to in 4.4.

4.3.2 Interviewer categories

The categories related to interviewer questions seek an answer to how common ground is established. I made the division between assertive questions, hidden agendas and open-ended questions, so that some general patterns could be found. I am aware that there are numerous linguistic (and non-linguistic) features that can be varied in order to alter the forms and meanings that each question has. Thus, there could be more categories, for instance, assertive questions could be divided further into ones that suggest something, and others that make stronger propositions. However, as common ground has not been studied in this context before, more simple approach to the analysis is the most reasonable one. Furthermore, adding more categories would make the analysis harder, and it would require much more background knowledge, so that different categories could be identified, and borderline cases could be solved systematically. One of the biggest advantages that the present classification has, is that it is simple and reliable, and thus, the analysis itself can be utilized as a solid background for further research.

4.3.2.1 Assertive questions

The first category consists of utterances that appeal to the common ground. They are either the interviewer's opinion about something, or the interviewer's suggestion of the manager's opinions. They can come in many forms, but even more important than the form of the utterance, is what kind of answer they expect. I will illustrate this with an example.

- (23) **IW:** Having reached 40 points, when I think, it was the last day of the last season when you reached it last season. I guess that means tremendous progress in your eyes? (GM3)

Here, one can see that the interviewer's question contains a suggestion, which requires the manager to take a stance. Basically, in addition to choosing only the topic, the interviewer has presented his own opinion as a starting point. By form, example (23) is a question, but an assertive one, since it includes a proposition.

4.3.2.2 Hidden agendas

The second category consists of questions that through the usage of presuppositions might mean something else than what is asked. This category is based on how presupposition triggers are used in order to create more complex questions. Hidden agendas divert from the more traditional role in which presupposition can occur, because they do not function solely as background knowledge. Since many theories concerning common ground give so much value to presuppositions, they are included in my categorization as well. Moreover, this category is

useful for answering the 3rd research question, because a low number of hidden agendas would suggest that the role of presupposition is something else, and vice versa. I have decided to count hidden agendas instead of presuppositions as such, because hidden agendas can be considered as a way of asking certain kind of questions, whereas the more traditional role is used for building background knowledge that serves as an introduction to actual questions. This way, the frequency of hidden agendas can be contrasted with the frequency of other interviewer question categories. Example (24) demonstrates how hidden agendas function in the data.

- (24) **IW:** Is there anything you can do about these headed goals you keep conceding in set piece situations in particular? (SD5)

I have marked this question as one of the instances that have a hidden agenda, because whatever the manager responds, he still accepts the presupposition that they keep conceding headed goals, unless he explicitly states that it is not the case. In general, this type of questions could be seen as a way for fooling the managers to admit something that they do even not realize, so that it could be brought up by the press.

4.3.2.3 Open-ended questions

The final category leaves more room for the manager to construct his answer than the first one. Basically, the interviewer chooses a topic, but does not narrow any potential responses down. The topics can be very broad, or more specific, but the responses can be practically anything. Example (25) introduces a rather basic instance of an open-ended question:

- (25) **IW:** Well Sean, a difficult place to come against the (in) form team in the premier league. How do you think your team fared performance-wise today? (SD3)

Here, the interviewer chooses a topic, but as opposed to (23), he does not take a stance. Consequently, the manager does not have to contrast his answer to any proposition, since the question does not include one. Open-ended questions are useful in setting the parameters for common ground in case they are not clear before the interview. Moreover, they are generally safer than assertions or hidden agendas, because they do not involve a stance that has to be accepted or corrected.

4.3.3 Manager responses

Manager responses are divided into three groups depending on the influence that the response has on common ground. Manager responses are often rather long and descriptive, but the beginning of the turn is almost always related to the question, which reveals whether something becomes common ground or not. I will describe each category briefly. It is important to

acknowledge that there are multiple ways to indicate acceptance or disagreement towards a proposition. In the data collected for this thesis, the reactions were rather easy to interpret, although there emerged a few borderline cases between acceptance and correction. But unless the manager did not somehow modify the interviewer's proposition, the response has been marked as an acceptance, even if the original proposition was not confirmed with words such as yes, or phrases such as I agree.

4.3.3.1 Common ground is accepted

The first category is simple, as it includes utterances where the manager accepts the interviewer's proposition. After that, the manager can describe that aspect further, but his stance towards the proposition does not change, and instead more knowledge on the matter is given. In other words, common ground is incremented, as Clark (1996, 40) suggests. The first category has two phases that 1) Interviewer's propositions, and 2) manager's acceptance, as in (26) below.

- (26) **IW:** It's a big step from Derby to Liverpool, and he (Jordon Ibe) took that today.
BR: He's a big talent, we've obviously seen that... (BR2)

Example (26) also demonstrates how the proposition is accepted indirectly, and the conclusion has been drawn from the fact that nothing in BR's response contrasts with IW's proposition.

4.3.3.2 Correction by the manager

The second category consists of utterances that modify the original proposition somehow, so that the manager can accept it to common ground. When compared to the first category, the second one has more stages, since it includes proposition, correction and following turns that determine how the participants react to the correction, and what will eventually become common ground. This is based on Asher & Gillies (2003) description on corrections, but I will explain more precisely in the Analysis how corrections function in the interviews. Example (27) below will serve as an example:

- (27) **IW:** You trust this group of players, but have they actually surprised you by how they responded today?
BR: No, they haven't surprised me... The target was to come into the game and perform well. (BR5)

Here, it is quite evident that IW makes a proposition, which BR corrects straight away.

4.3.3.3 Descriptive answers

The final category involves descriptive answers that contribute to common ground in a different manner. These are responses to open ended questions that become automatically common

ground. At the same time, they set the parameters for further questions, as the interviewer becomes aware of the manager's thoughts and views about the game. Descriptive answers are likely to occur most often after games where the expectations were not self-explanatory, or after ones that included unclear incidents that need to be described. Example (28) below demonstrates a descriptive answer that does not have to take a stance on any proposition.

(28) **IW:** How was your performance this afternoon?

GM: We deserved it in the end. Tactically, we had a good game plan and we stuck to it... (GM2)

It is important to note that all manager responses are descriptive, but the third category has a different relation to interviewer's question. The manager can start building the common ground without having to take a stance on any proposition, the interviewer, on the other hand observes the manager's response so that he can make more accurate propositions in the following questions.

4.4 Caveats

Finally, I had first included a category for manager responses that reject the proposition altogether, but after conducting the pilot study I noticed that rejections did not occur. Correcting seems to be a much more efficient way of handling unfavorable propositions, mostly because the managers usually tend to rationalize why some propositions cannot be accepted. The difference between a rejection and correction is that when something is rejected, it does not become part of common ground, and possibly a new question would have to be asked. Whereas when something is corrected, the corrected proposition may become part of the participants' common ground, which accelerates the process. In Asher & Gillies' (2003, 483) terms, settledness can be reached faster.

Another important aspect that ought to be acknowledged is the individual variance, and its influence on the results. Although I have listed possible reasons for selecting specific questions or responses in 4.3.1 and 4.3.2, individual variance has an effect on those decisions as well. However, there is no means to measure it, because the interviewers remain anonymous. But when the number of tokens that occurred in each interview is compared, only one interview can be identified for having distinctively different division between the categories, as the interview in question does not contain assertive questions at all. The rest of the interviews have either both assertive and open-ended questions, or only assertive questions, both of which correlate well with the results. In other words, although there is variance in the interviewers' styles and preferences, it seems to have little effect on the results.

5 Analysis

This section is concerned with the results of the study. I will present the results in visual form through tables and figures, along with comments. I will also include a separate section for discussing some of the key findings, so that they can be compared against the theoretical framework. Although the interviewer questions and manager responses are counted separately, they are strictly connected. Thus, both frequencies are introduced at the beginning of the section. After the overview, the interviews are divided based on the match results, so that wins, losses and draws can be examined separately. Table 2 shows the number of tokens for each interviewer category. Respectively, table 3 contains the same information for manager categories.

Table 2 Distribution between interviewer question categories

Assertive question	Open-ended question	Hidden agenda	Total
68	34	7	109

Table 3 Distribution between manager response categories

Acceptance	Descriptive answer	Correction	Total
52	41	16	109

As was mentioned in 4.3.1 as well, the categorization is based on how the interviewer questions narrow down the manager responses and how that influences the common ground. In general, the patterns are fairly self-explanatory, and they can be concluded from the frequency of each category. Nonetheless, I will explain them briefly, as they can be considered as one of the starting points for further discussion.

Assertive questions expect either acceptance, or correction, depending on how the manager positions himself in relation to the proposition. Importantly, a stance was taken every time there was an assertive question, as the sum of accepting and correcting manager responses match the number of assertive questions. On the other hand, the added number of open-ended questions and hidden agendas correspond to the number of descriptive answers.

What this overview suggests, is that assertive utterances are the most common way of asking questions, followed by open-ended questions. Hidden agendas, on the other hand, are rare. The distribution of manager responses reflects the interviewer questions, as acceptances are most common, followed by descriptive answers and corrections. I will return to the

dynamics of the interviews in the discussion, as well as to the role of presupposition. It is important to note that the sample of interviews is rather small, and as a result, instead of finding the undeniable truth, the aim is to find some patterns that might occur in larger scale as well.

5.1 Wins

The data includes 10 interviews, where the manager in questions was victorious. The distribution is shown in figures 1 and 2 below.

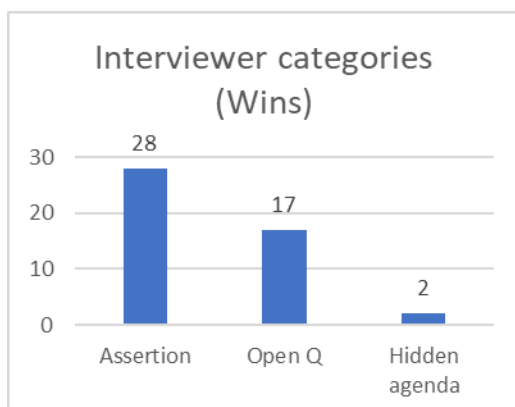


Figure 1 Interviewer categories (Wins)

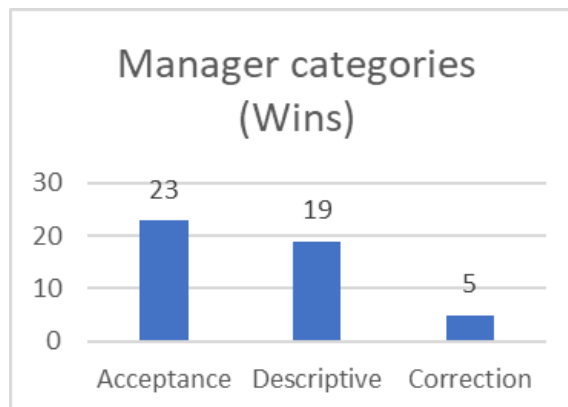


Figure 2 Manager categories (Wins)

When the interviewer questions are compared to the full data, there appears slightly less tokens for assertions and slightly more for open ended questions. In a similar fashion, the questions result in more descriptive answers from the managers than with losses or draws. As the data is limited, the reason could vary from interviewer's individual differences to topics discussed. I will present a few examples from interviews that have occurred after victorious games.

- (29) **IW:** Mark, is the word to use to describe your performance tonight professional, thoroughly professional?
MH: Yeah, I thought we were very good... (MH2)

Example (29) is an opening turn, which involves an assertive question, and an acceptance. What is constantly repeated in the data, is that the manager's turn will proceed for a longer time, and what follows in their turns has very little to do with the original questions. Although the questions were often about specific events, the responses cover, more often than not, general issues such as injuries and forthcoming schedules. In overall, common ground is established smoothly, as there are only 5 corrections, and moreover, correcting does not seem to have a negative effect on common ground, or on the interviews as such. I will return to this aspect in 5.7.

5.2 Losses

The data involves 9 interviews, where the manager's side has lost the game. The distribution of both interviewer and manager categories are presented below.

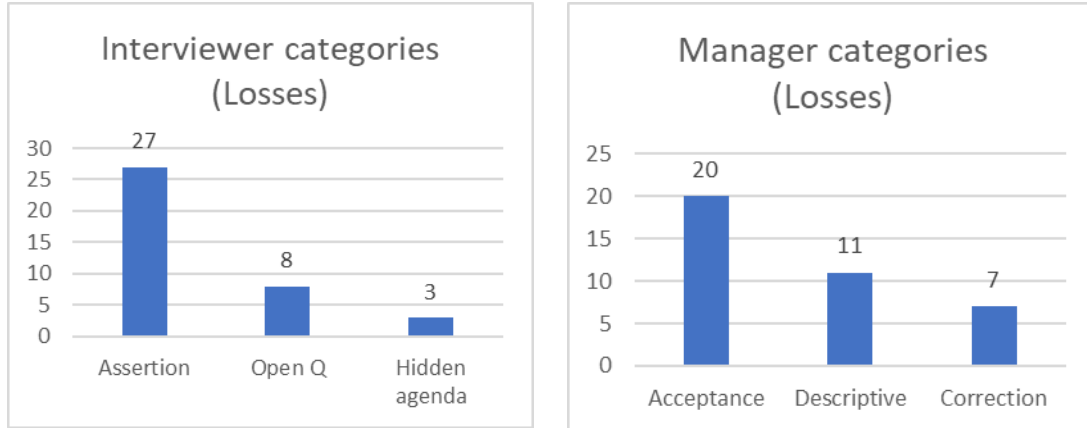


Figure 3 Interviewer categories (Losses) **Figure 4** Manager categories (Losses)

One general difference between won and lost games is that lost games have 4.2 turns per speaker, whereas the number is 4.7 and 4.8 for won and drawn games. The difference is not large by any means, but it suggests that managers tend to use lengthier explanations after lost games, and thus, there is less time for additional questions. The frequencies, on the other hand, imply that the interviewers have a stronger tendency to use assertive questions after losses, which transfers to manager responses as well. The manager categories include more tokens for acceptances and corrections than after wins or draws. Consequently, there are less descriptive answers, as matching questions were asked rarely. I will present few examples again, in order to demonstrate some patterns.

- (30) **IW:** Garry, your overall assessment of tonight's performance.
GM: We were very poor. We had no tempo to our game... (GM5)
- (31) **IW:** Well, Garry, I think a disappointment, because you had your chances in first half to take this game.
GM: Yeah, ultimately a disappointment really. (GM4)

Regardless of what type of question is used, an open-ended question in (30), or assertion in (31), the manager responses indicate that they are disappointed. Thus, it can be argued that making assertions is safer in this environment, as the manager's overall feelings about the performance can be predicted. Although the number of corrections is higher for lost than won

matches, the corrections occurred in response to assertions that were about specific incidents, rather than overall disappointment, as (32) illustrates.

(32) **IW:** Steven Gerrard has issued a statement of apology, was that an example of being too fired up for the occasion?

BR: I think that Steven probably watched the first half and seen us not make a tackle. There was probably a wee bit of frustration in there. Like you say, he's apologized... (BR4)

Example (32) demonstrates clearly how BR protects Steven Gerrard by correcting the interviewer's assertion. Managers rarely criticize individual players, not to mention club captains and legends, such as Steven Gerrard. Gerrard had received a red card after being on the field for 38 seconds, and it serves as a prime example for an individual incident that will in any case receive major headlines. What BR does, is that he shifts the focus to the collective team performance that led to individual frustration, instead of admitting that Gerrard was "too fired up for the occasion". It can be assumed as well that managers are even more cautious about their comments after lost matches, as the pressure towards them and their players grow every time they lose.

5.3 Draws

My hypothesis was that draws are the most difficult category to approach in terms of common ground. This is based on the relationship between expectations and match result, which was briefly discussed in 2.2. Although there were only 5 draws, the figures below suggest that there is some proof for the claim.



Figure 5 Interviewer categories (Draws) **Figure 6** Manager categories (Draws)

The frequencies support my hypothesis in two ways. First, the interviewers use more open-ended questions and less assertions after draws, which indicates that making accurate assertions

is harder, possibly because the correspondence between expectations and results is not as clear than with wins or losses. This is visible in the high percentage of corrections as well. Not only are there considerably fewer assertions, but in addition, almost half of the propositions are corrected by the manager before they can be included to the common ground. Examples (33) and (34) will be used to demonstrate.

- (33) **IW:** Garry, was a draw just about the right result this afternoon?
GM: Uhm, in a way but, we could've easily had the three... (GM6)
- (34) **IW:** How proud are you of your team?
SD: Very pleased, very pleased with application, very pleased with some of the quality we've shown...
IW: You said sometimes your team needed to be a little bit harder, a little bit less pure, maybe in some ways. Were they hard enough today for you today, were they too hard, perhaps?
SD: No, I've not really said anything about that to be honest. I've said that we've got to make sure that we learn what this division is about... (SD4)

The response in (33) is actually quite clear borderline case between acceptance and correction, but since GM does not correct explicitly that they deserved more, it has been marked as an acceptance, although it is a reluctant one. Example (34), on the other hand is a straightforward instance of a hidden agenda and a matching descriptive answer. The interviewer's second turn in (34) includes an assertion that is completely overturned by SD.

As a brief conclusion, one could argue that the match result has an influence on how the interview is approached by both participants. It seems to be easier to make successful statements after a lost match, at least when the focus is shifted to overall assessment of the performance. I would also like to add that after victorious games, there is no point in asking, "are you happy with the result?", since the response is always "yes". After wins, the questions were often about individual performances and incidents, because they are likely to cause more diverse and thus interesting responses.

5.4 Participant roles

Although participant roles are not mentioned in the research questions, as the focus of the study is on common ground and presupposition, they are among the most important aspects that are present in the interviews. The reason for this claim is that every choice that the participants make is somehow related to their role. Thus, the roles can be understood as shared background knowledge as well. In other words, they are in the participants' common ground. The roles are visible, for instance, in the way that the interviews are constructed, and they allow the managers to have longer turns, where they can proceed for a minute without being interrupted. I will not

go into too much detail here, but it is important to acknowledge that participant roles, along with many rules and customs limit the choices that the participants can make during the interviews. Most of these customs will be covered under themes such as settledness, or common ground. Participant roles will be briefly compared to those explained by Bloor & Bloor in 2.4, but other than that, they should be seen as important background knowledge.

In addition to participant roles, I would like to stress the role of prior experience and actual situational experience, as Kecskes & Zhang (2013, 379) express it. It is partly prior experience from these situations that gives interviewers and managers the readiness to conduct the interviews smoothly. The knowledge of the rules and customs is a consequence of having participated in numerous interviews before. Games and their events change, but the overall dynamics are stable, which creates routine that can be identified from the interviews.

5.5 Establishing common ground

In this section I will analyze common ground in relation to Kecskes & Zhang's (2013, 380) idea that common ground can be old knowledge that is activated from memory, shared knowledge that can be sought and maintained, or new knowledge that is created in the course of a conversation. The following extracts are used in order to illustrate how common ground is established.

(35) **IW:** It's hard to tell with him, isn't it, cause he's such a tough guy. At the time you could see the depression in his cheekbone, but he was quite keen to carry on.

MH: Well yeah, that's what John does, he's quite prepared to carry on the pitch and try to make a game of it... (MH1)

In (35), the knowledge about John Walters' toughness is shared knowledge that is maintained, as Walters, despite having possibly fractured his cheekbone, would have wanted to continue playing. It could basically be old knowledge that is activated as well, since Walters' toughness is based on past events, but in this extract, nothing refers to past. If Walters retires and someone says: "I will always remember when you had fractured your cheekbone and refused to be substituted", the reference is made to past events that are shared only after they have been activated. But in this context, the events are already activated, as they are recent and salient as well.

(36) **IW:** Sean, I imagine you are encouraged, but nevertheless feeling a little bit hard done by?

SD: Yea, a little bit I mean, you know I thought we were very good, first half was excellent by the way... (SD6)

In (36), however, the participants are creating new knowledge, since “SD feeling a little bit hard done by” has not been discussed before, and therefore it cannot be considered as shared knowledge that is activated. Instead, the IW assumes how SD might be feeling, and based on that assumption, he makes a proposition, which is accepted to the participants’ common ground. Finally, in (37) below, the interviewer’s open-ended question allows BR to create a great deal of new knowledge during a long turn that lasts for a minute. As the question is about BR’s thoughts, it can be argued that most of it is indeed new knowledge, since BR is the only person that has access to his thoughts. Moreover, even he seems to struggle with producing a coherent answer to the question, which indicates that it would have been hard for the interviewer to seek common ground through old or shared knowledge.

(37) **IW:** Brendan, it was every bit as intense as it always is. What are your thoughts on your team’s performance?

BR: Well, first of all pride and in terms of the second half performance, you know to come back against the... (BR stops at the middle of a sentence), playing with ten men was always going to be difficult, but we showed tremendous character... (BR4)

The relationship between core and emergent common ground (Kecskes & Zhang 2013, 380-81) is present in all of the abovementioned extracts. For instance, John Walters being a tough guy is background knowledge that is based on earlier performances, and once that toughness becomes a relevant discussion topic, the information is activated. The interviewer’s assumption in (36) is related to core common ground in a slightly different manner. The interviewer compares that match in question to a set of previous games, in order to evaluate whether SD is satisfied with the draw, or not. After evaluating the game, the interviewer concludes that managers are often encouraged by a draw, but despite that, having not won is disappointing. Based on this core common ground, the interviewer makes an assumption, through which he attempts to create new knowledge that becomes emergent common ground. Once SD accepts the proposition, the process is complete. In (37), only interviewer’s short introduction “it was every bit as intense as it always is” is related to core common ground, but BR’s response can be considered as emergent common ground. In summary, in all of the previously presented extracts, common ground affects only small units, such as single propositions, which are important in constructing individual questions or turns. But in a similar manner, common ground can have an influence on larger themes as well, which will be discussed in the following section.

5.6 Common ground and topicality

In this section, I will use a bit longer extracts in order to illustrate how common ground can have an effect, for instance, on what topics are discussed. These quotes reveal more about the characteristics of post-match interviews as well, since manager responses have not been shortened, as in previous sections. The main issue concerning topicality is why certain questions are answered thoroughly, whereas others do not yield a proper response, and what effects does that have on the interview. Example (38) will demonstrate this:

(38) **IW:** At 2-1, did you get a real feeling that it was on?

BR: I thought that the players, how they were performing and how they were looking to attack and go forward, I thought that Manchester United were on the back foot and that made it very uncomfortable for them. So, but at that moment you need a little bit of brag, little bit of luck and oh, you score a great goal. And we just couldn't master that.

IW: Steven Gerrard has issued a statement of apology. Is that an example of being too fired up for the occasion? (BR4)

If the interviewer's first question and BR's response are examined more closely, it can be argued that BR does not even answer the question. He does not comment, whether he thought that his team was challenging for the points, or not. He rather circulates around the question by giving somewhat vague overall description of the events. At that point, one could assume that the interviewer would not be satisfied with the response, and that he would ask a specifying question or state that BR did not answer the question. But instead, the interviewer proceeds to a new topic. This pattern is very common in the data, and if it is examined in Delin's (2000) terms, the structure consists mostly of question and answer pairs. Consequently, the units that are connected to each other contain only two turns, and even that can be questioned, because manager responses are sometimes extremely long, and some parts of them are not relevant to the original question at all. Furthermore, the lack of follow-ups causes looseness, as in (38), where IW's first question and BR's response are thematically connected, but the third turn is in a sense disconnected, because it moves to a new topic without any conclusion of the previous one. I will return to BR not answering the question thoroughly in the following section that focuses on settledness.

Although the interviews are structurally dialogues, there are fairly few instances where opinions are being exchanged and more than two turns are discussing the same topic. I will illustrate this with a different example, where the turns are more firmly connected.

- (39) **IW:** While all disappointments come from defeat, but particularly disappointing is that there was never quite that same spark I associate with Burnley performance today.
SD: I thought that there was a flatness to the game actually between both teams. I mean maybe coming off of different results for different reasons, good result for them, good result for us in the grand scheme of things. You know what people probably thought was gonna happen when we go to Chelsea. So, there was an odd sort of flatness to both sides I thought. There were still some pockets of quality I thought, and the flow of the game was decent, couple of chances for us, couple of chances for them. Couple of maybe defining moments. I thought we had certainly a possibility for a penalty with Sam Vokes... I think Sam Vokes had every chance and probably a bit too honest. You know how people react in the box when they get thugged, and he's just contained the ball.
IW: That was the thing about it, I mean, Sam Vokes barely reacted, and yet others who saw it did.
SD: Well, we play with honesty, we know that... (SD2)

Example (39) is a rare exception to the pattern, since it includes a follow-up that connects the third turn to the previous two. The follow-up is created, as the interviewer spots something interesting from SD's answer, and he expresses his opinion about the matter, to which SD replies. The difference to (38), however, is that in (38) the initiative to discuss a certain topic came from the interviewer, whereas in (39) it came from the manager. In (38), the interviewer concludes that BR is probably not willing to discuss that aspect more in length, whereas in (39), the interviewer thought that SD is likely to comment the potential penalty even more, since he brought it up. If the interviewer's turns in (38) and (39) are compared in greater detail, it can be argued that in (38) the interviewer is only changing topics, but in (39), he is actually able to comment on the same issue that SD is discussing, and thus, the dialogue element is stronger. This reflects to the larger picture as well, as the interviewers have to evaluate how willing the managers are to comment on certain aspects, and whether it is worth to ask about some issues or not.

The relation of common ground to the previous examples is interesting as well. Common ground functions much like Clark (1996, 39) suggests. It can be argued that the nature of common ground is cumulative, and it can be concluded from the previous examples as well. Why the interviewers decide not to ask specifying questions about topics that have not yet been answered thoroughly, can be rationalized by the accumulation aspect. Once the manager does not answer a specific question properly, common ground is updated, and in the then present state of activity, the interviewer recognizes that this certain topic is not favored by the manager, and thus, the next question focuses on different topic. However, long manager responses, as in (40) are slightly different to the previous extracts.

- (40) **IW:** Well that was really tough afternoon for your hard work.
MH: Yeah but, I think in fairness the most ambitious team won the game. The team that tried to get on the ball and play, Hull, I think, just came to frustrate us and their game plan was obviously to go away with a clean sheet if they could. Obviously, once we scored, they had to come out and throw a few more people to the forward, but in the end, we saw the game out. We won the game, but we are a little bit disappointed with the performance of the officials, to be perfectly honest. I mean, there's a tackle in the first half on Steven Ireland that could have finished his career, why the referee hasn't given a straight red for that, I have no idea. A lot of talk about certain tackle in another game involving Chelsea and Burnley a couple of weeks back, but this one is even worse than that. So the referee's got to get their act together.
IW: Hull thought Peter Crouch was offside for the goal, very tight call. The referees at the moment, do we even know the situation as it is in the moment with decisions, Mark? (MH3)

Here, although the IW's initial question is assertive, it does not narrow the response at all, which is visible in MH's turn as well. Thematically MH moves from the match events to match officials and to the overall policy on dangerous tackles. There would have been two or three occasions where the interviewer could have interrupted MH, in order to ask something specifying, but instead, he allows MH to finish. This decision is possibly based on the fact that the interviewer is observing what topics MH is willing to discuss. For instance, managers are usually reluctant to discuss the match officials, at least this directly, but since MH has already made the initiative, the interviewer utilizes this in his second question. This is similar to what was discussed in the previous paragraphs about how topics are proposed by the interviewer through questions, but the manager has the power to either accept, or indicate that the topic is not favored by not answering the actual question. In (40), the interviewer does not even have to ask MH's willingness to discuss the match officials, as MH chose the topic himself in response to a very broad question that basically allowed him to answer anything. In a summary, long manager responses that cover multiple topics reduce the risk of choosing an unfavorable topic, as the participant's common ground about the appropriateness of certain topics is updated during the manager response. If (40) is compared to a simplified fictional scenario in (41), the difference should be visible.

- (41) **IW:** You must be thrilled.
Manager: Yes, I am.

In (41), the manager's short response does not contain any hints about preferred topics, even though it answers the question perfectly. Consequently, it is much harder to construct the following questions, as none of the information that was provided, for instance in (40), is available.

As these two sections have shown, open-ended questions, such as in (37), or (38), are not the only device that can be used for setting the parameters for further questions and topics. Moreover, the assertions used in (39) and especially in (40) are fairly vague, and they leave much room for the managers to formulate their answer. Finally, long manager responses can be utilized by simply observing what topics the managers are willing to discuss, because that information can be beneficial for asking more accurate or specific questions in the later stages of the interview.

5.7 Settledness

In this section, I will be focusing on settledness, which, along with corrections (Asher & Gillies 2003), was introduced in 3.8, in order to illustrate how propositions may become common ground. Settledness is an important aspect of common ground, because only settled information can be added to common ground. However, the goal of this section is to demonstrate how common ground concerns only managers in post-match interviews. Examples (42) and (43) serve as two contradicting scenarios, since (42) includes a correction, whereas (43) does not.

- (42) **IW:** You've said sometimes that your team needed to be a little bit harder, a little bit less pure, maybe in some ways. Were they hard enough today for you, were they too hard perhaps?
SD: No, I've not really said anything about that to be honest. I've said that we've got to make sure that we learn what this division is about, but that's more about the tactical and technical side of the game...
IW: Chelsea would've their viewpoint on Ashley Barnes' involvement in the sending off, but overall for you, his performance, he has created, he's been physical, he's had chances. (SD4)
- (43) **IW:** When you think of all the different types of wins you've had in this season, I guess this shows a little sight of character, doesn't it?
GM: Yeah, I think we've shown it all season, we've won games where we've played great football, some really entertaining football. We've won games where we have had to dig in and make it scrappy, or not make it scrappy, deal with the scrappiness of it...
IW: I guess you were aware of the significance of the fixture to them, knowing they had so many other difficult games coming up as well? (GM3)

Examples (42) and (43) illustrate the managers' different level of settledness in relation to the interviewers' propositions. In (42), SD is not settled with the proposition, and thus, he makes a correction, whereas in (43), GM is settled with the interviewer's proposition, and he accepts it instantly. Consequently, the different relation to the original proposition modifies the manager responses in the examples. In (42), SD first rejects the interviewer's suggestion by claiming that he has not said anything like that. After that, he makes a correction, where he describes

what he had actually said previously. Basically, the process is longer than in (43), because the interview cannot proceed until SD is settled with the interviewer's proposition. In other words, he has to correct the contents of his earlier statement, since the IW might have misinterpreted them. In (43), GM accepts the proposition straight away, from where he can easily proceed into describing the different wins that his team has acquired during the season.

As Asher & Gillies (2003, 489) pointed out, usually, in case an assertion is corrected, the speaker that uttered the original proposition would have every right to defend his proposition. What this implies, is that the turns that follow corrections should be somehow different than turns that occur after an acceptance. But as one can already see from the previously presented examples, there is nothing different in the 3rd turns, and the pattern is visible throughout the data as well. Thus, it can be argued that settledness is highly important for managers, as they are strict about how they are quoted, what kind of propositions are related to them, and what topics are discussed. But if settledness is viewed from the interviewer's perspective, Asher & Gillies' (ibid.) ideas do not seem to hold. It can be argued that an interviewer whose question has not been answered, would not be satisfied, yet there is nothing in the data to indicate that. Similarly, in (42) and (43), the third turns are identical, although in (42), the interviewer's assertion has been overturned. Based on these examples, and the data as a whole, it seems that settledness is an important aspect for the managers, but it does not concern the interviewers at all.

5.8 The role of presuppositions

So far, the analysis has been focusing on common ground, in order to assess the first two research questions. The latter part of this section is devoted to presuppositions, so that the third research question can be answered as well. I will first concentrate on hidden agendas in order to show how they function in the data. After that, hidden agendas will be contrasted to the usual role of presupposition in the interviews, so that one can realize the difference in their functions more clearly. I will introduce a few possible reasons for why hidden agendas did not occur more often in the data in 6.6.

5.8.1 Hidden agendas

As I mentioned at the beginning of the Analysis, although there are only 7 tokens of hidden agendas, that does not mean that there are no more presuppositions in the data. The question is about the role that presuppositions occupy in the interviews' questions. I will illustrate this point with a few examples. For the sake of clarity, I marked after each example what they presuppose, so that the idea is easier to conceptualize.

- (44) **IW:** Is there anything you can do about these headed goals you keep conceding, in set-piece situations in particular? (SD5) *PS: Burnley keeps conceding headed goals.*
- (45) **IW:** How painful a goal was that to concede, because, I mean, Trippier could have gone anywhere and looks as if Tom Heaton had it for a second and then didn't. (SD2) *PS: The goal was painful to concede.*
- (46) **IW:** You did have more of the ball second half, what did you change? (GM2) *PS: Something was changed.*

In all extracts presented above, presuppositions are important to the question content-wise, as once the manager begins his answer, he automatically accepts the presuppositions, unless he explicitly rejects the presupposition. In (46) for example, if the manager rejects the presupposition and responds that they changed nothing, there remains nothing to be answered. However, the managers gave descriptive answers after each question, which suggests that the presuppositions or hidden agendas were accepted as well.

5.8.2 The usual role

The other role besides hidden agendas is the more traditional one, where something is taken for granted, and thus, it has not received a central role in the utterance. As was seen in 3.3, using presupposition is often more efficient than including every bit of information into the main contents of a sentence. Thus, it is no surprise that presuppositions are extremely frequent in post-match interviews, since the interviews are short, and their pace is rapid. I will present a few examples again.

- (47) **IW:** Brendan I would imagine that you're probably the more disappointed manager after that? (BR2). *PS: One manager is more disappointed than the other.*
- (48) **IW:** Brendan, tell us your thoughts on those two goals today. (BR5). *PS: There were two goals today (but which two, since the game ended 2-1).*
- (49) **IW:** Well that was really tough afternoon for your hard work. (MH3). *PS: Either Mark Hughes or his team worked hard.*

When compared to the previous examples concerning hidden agendas, a clear difference can be seen, because the presuppositions that have been identified here are less central, almost as if they are not part of the question, but rather something that has already been accepted. However, in examples 44-46, the presuppositions were at the core of the question. When 47-49 are examined more closely, the rules of presupposition accommodation can be used easily to explain (48) and (49), since the salience mechanism automatically selects the right objects,

which are BR's Liverpool's two goals in (48), and MH's team's hard work, over only MH's hard work in (49). Example (47) is more complicated since one cannot tell whether the other manager is disappointed at all, but that does not deny the fact that BR certainly is.

In general, the accuracy of the presuppositions is worth noting, especially when considering the rapid pace that the interviews proceed with. This requires cooperation, but also high understanding of what the other person is talking about. On the other hand, both participants are familiar with the context, meaning the interview in general, but also football lexicon and the events in the field. This supports the flow of conversation, because right information is taken as granted. The actual role of presupposition is somewhat hard to measure, because most presuppositions go completely unnoticed, which implies that they are accepted as they stand. When compared to hidden agendas, the more traditional role of presupposition is almost invisible, because they serve as the shared background knowledge. It does not, however, mean that the role would not be important, because that is not the case. To stress this point, these short interviews would not even be possible if every presupposition would have to be accepted separately. Or alternatively, if every presupposition would have to be explained, instead of using presupposition triggers that carry the intended meaning.

6 Discussion

This section focuses closely on three aspects that require a more speculative approach than, for instance, common ground, which was covered in detail in the Analysis. I will begin the section with a lengthier explanation on why settledness concerns only managers, and consequently, how it affects the interviews in overall. Secondly, I introduce a few possible reasons that could rationalize the relatively small frequency of hidden agendas. Finally, I will briefly compare common ground in post-match interviews to Stalnaker's (2002, 704) idea about pretense common ground and justify, why that kind of setting is not likely to feature in the data.

6.1 Settledness

Basically, settledness can be simplified into a role, where a person decides what information is suitable to become common ground. Normally, both participants would be able to defend their propositions, as was mentioned in 3.8. But as 5.7 shows, in post-match interviews, settledness concerns for the large part only the managers. A clear difference can be found, when this is compared to Bloor & Bloor's (2007, 108) example interview where the interviewer shouted, interrupted, threatened the interviewee's face, and accused him of not answering the question. At least based on the data, post-match interviews do not include any of the abovementioned features, and although some of them resemble more stylistic features, at least accusations of not answering the question are indeed linked to settledness. In the following paragraph, I aim to describe why settledness does not concern the managers.

Once again, the length of the interviews is the most important single aspect. As the interviewers are aware that they have only 3 minutes, sometimes even less, certain matters have to be prioritized over others. One of the less prioritized features is settledness, and another is having a full control of topics that are discussed. As a starting point, it is important to note that the audience is interested in the managers' comments, but at the same time, the managers have more at stake, since their own, and their team's public image could be harmed by inconsiderate comments. Thus, settledness is a high priority for the managers. But for the interviewer, it should not matter whether the manager responses are acceptances or corrections, since they are likely to include the same comments. The only difference is that accepting is faster than correcting, but on the other hand, correcting, as opposed to rejection, benefits the interviewer as well, since he receives actual comments that can be used by the press, and furthermore, those comments set the parameters for further questions. Had the interviews been longer, the interviewers would have had more time to defend and rationalize their propositions, which

could increase the amount of actual dialogue as well. Finally, the frequency of hedges and question tags in the interviewer questions indicates that they might not be fully committed to their propositions. For instance, in (42), the interviewer could have said “your team was clearly too hard”, but instead he suggested that “were they too hard perhaps”. This choice of words implies that this could be the case, but the manager is fully entitled to correct the proposition as well.

The managers’ tendency to cover multiple topics during one response can be beneficial for the interviewers, as was the case in example (40). By allowing that, the interviewers gain knowledge about the common ground, and the manager’s willingness to cover certain topics is exposed as well. Thus, one conclusion could be that the interviewer does not necessarily hold less power, but the current customs are the most suitable ones for this kind of setting. Moreover, if one contrasts post-match interviews with political interviews, the different context alone changes many variables. For instance, the interview analyzed by Bloor & Bloor (2007, 108) lasted eight minutes, and many political interviews are considerably longer. As a consequence, the interviewer can spend more time on a certain topic. On the other hand, the goal of a post-match interview is different as well. Instead of providing an accurate explanation on one or two aspects, as might be the case for political interviews, post-match interviews should offer a broader overview of the events that took place in the field, along with the most current issues that concern the club in question. Thus, the interviewers do not repeat their questions in case they are not answered, but rather proceed to the next topic. Finally, one could argue that political interviews cover topics that are more important, and that politicians bear greater responsibility than football managers, which is why the interviewers are entitled to demand more accurate and comprehensive answers as well. Although this can be part of the explanation, it is worth remembering that the EPL managers represent clubs that operate with hundreds of million pounds, and thus, their responsibilities should not be underestimated.

6.2 Pretense common ground

Comparing common ground in post-match interviews to Stalnaker’s (2002, 704) suggestion about actual common ground being different to what the participants are implying, is interesting in many ways. So far, it has become evident that the interviewers are settled with manager responses, even though their propositions would have been corrected. However, that does not necessarily mean that the interviewers agree with the corrected propositions. It is also worth mentioning that sometimes the interviewers can deliberately make inaccurate propositions, in order to raise stronger reactions in the manager. But in the larger picture, post-match interviews

are the initial medium, through which the managers give brief comments. In this context, the role that the interviewers have does not include taking a stance on what the managers say. There are pundits who do that for living in match broadcasts, or on talk shows that are concentrated on football. Basically, the interviewer is aiming to seek common ground, in order to conduct the interview successfully. The manager, on the other hand, can set the parameters for the interview, but in case they are based on opinions that do not seem justified, they will be criticized by pundits or journalists that are not operating with a three-minute time limit. When the idea of pretense common ground is considered against this background, it is likely that the common ground resembles the best understanding of both participants.

6.3 Reasons why hidden agendas remained rare

There are several factors that reduce the potential of hidden agendas. I will focus initially on the personal relationship between the interviewer and the manager, as it is worth noting that the same interviewer is usually present at every home game. Furthermore, this aspect was even more important in the old post-match interviews that were analyzed, as they involved only two people. When considering the basic definition of hidden agendas, getting the manager to admit something that he does not even realize is questionable. It can create an impression that the interviewer is trying to mislead the interviewee, but on the other hand, the interviewer can receive some extremely interesting comments, which could make the major headlines. However, this can backfire on the interviewer at some point, as the manager realizes what has happened. Moreover, the managers are aware of all kinds of tricks, and they are likely to reject presuppositions that would harm their own, or their team's image. The rejection process would then reduce time from discussing other matters. Finally, even if some presupposition would go unnoticed, the managers have the possibility to correct their statements later as well. In case the process proceeds that far, it is evident that the manager in question is not pleased with how the previous interview was handled. Consequently, when the parties meet again after the next home game, there must be at least some kind of change in the atmosphere.

In addition to the more personal relationship, there exists a professional dimension as well. As a starting point, one should acknowledge the economical aspect, as the managers are front figures of clubs that are dealing with hundreds of millions of pounds annually. Consequently, that creates certain standards and expectations for the managers, but moreover, the managers expect certain behavior from the interviewers as well. As a warning example, Sir Alex Ferguson, the former manager of Manchester United did not give any interviews to BBC for seven years, after BBC had commented critically Ferguson's son's role in Manchester

United (Plunkett 2011). The incident illustrates that there are guidelines that the interviewers should follow as well. Transparency and honesty are certainly values that are appreciated, and that could be one reason why hidden agendas are used rarely. The results already suggest that assertive questions are preferred, possibly because they are straightforward, and thus easier to correct by the manager. If we return to example (33) in 5.3 and compare the interviewer's turns, a surprising issue can be found. The interviewer's initial question that contains a hidden agenda is accepted smoothly, whereas the assertive second question is completely overturned. Although this is only one occasion, it could imply that it is more favorable to utter an assertion that is corrected, instead of utilizing some hidden agenda in order to get shocking comments. In larger picture it also suggests that hidden agendas are used with harmless topics, such as tactical changes, or overall assessments of performance. As a contrast, more delicate matters are approached using assertions, so that the interviewers can be as transparent as possible. This clearly suggests that there is present a strong culture of professionalism.

Whatever the reason is, it seems that I had exaggerated the role of presupposition as a tool for "hidden agendas". In order to receive more comprehensive answer to this matter, the interviewers' preferences and styles should be studied more in depth. Possibly due to the reasons presented above, hidden agendas are not most suitable for post-match interviews, yet in some other context they are likely to be more frequent. It would be interesting to study whether some kind of continuum exists between hidden agendas and the more traditional role that presuppositions can occupy.

7 Conclusion

Common ground can be considered as an important factor in the EPL post-match interviews, as can be seen especially in sections 5.5 and 5.6. Its most immediate effects are visible in small units, such as individual propositions, or larger themes, such as topics. As the results of the quantitative analysis show, common ground is established most often through propositions that are mainly assertive questions, which are either accepted directly or corrected during the following manager response. Alternatively, managers can create common ground in response to open-ended questions, and in such case, the response falls automatically into participants' common ground. When common ground is examined in relation to individual propositions, the division between emergent and core common ground (Kecskes & Zhang 2013, 381) is useful, as it takes into account that information can be processed in various ways, and in addition to that, the speakers might have different stances towards same information. On the other hand, when the scope of common ground is extended to cover larger themes, such as topicality, Clark's (1996, 40) definition on the accumulation aspect can be rationalized. In order to illustrate briefly, if a certain topic is avoided, or does not yield interesting comments, common ground is updated. According to that state of activity, the interviewer usually proceeds into a new topic. Similarly, long manager responses allow the interviewer to ask specifying questions about all topics that the manager covered in his response, examples of which can be found in 5.6.

The role of presupposition resembles more the traditional one that was described in 3.5, for instance by Levinson (1983). The data contains 7 hidden agendas, which are not used in order to create shocking headlines, but rather in relation to harmless topics. Most often presuppositions were used as a background knowledge that was taken as granted, but that is an important factor in enabling the interviews to proceed fast and smoothly. One of the most interesting future research topics that arouse from the data is hidden agendas, since this paper cannot answer thoroughly why they are quite rare, or in what context they could be more common.

Another aspect that would require more research is sports interviews as a genre. Interview often refers to a political interview or job interview in academic literature. However, as the Discussion suggests, post-match interviews have different participant roles, levels of settledness and power relations than the abovementioned interviews. Thus, a broader overview of sports interviews could be beneficial in setting these parameters for future studies. A more specific topic could include for instance power relations in short interviews, since it is

challenging to justify why the interviewers seem to hold considerably less power. This aspect is highlighted, as Delin (2000) for instance argues that interviewers are usually the more powerful party. Finally, although the different results and expectations in sports were acknowledged while the current research was conducted, they could be combined to an academic study in a more systematic manner as well.

8 List of references

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Appendix 1 Full list of interviews

Zak R. 21.2.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nKLdSPwJB1k> [GM1]
Zak R. 1.2.2015 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_jSqzXGgkhM [GM2]
Zak R. 1.3.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4CyTeFJv1b4> [GM3]
Zak R. 16.3.2015 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1f8PPH30G_M [GM4]
Zak R. 12.2.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lkq0Kj8pXUQ> [GM5]
Zak R. 7.2.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYpSjTST8A4> [GM6]
Zak R. 16.3.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rny4abCYzLI> [BR1]
Zak R. 17.2.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twNTqj3yMuQ> [BR2]
Toscano Molnar. 31.7.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96QzpELqGN0> [BR3]
FootballHD. 22.3.2015 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gwxPN_QEjU8 [BR4]
Zak R. 1.3.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ofa3X3cQkm4> [BR5]
Zak R. 31.1.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0PuFne1KcD4> [BR6]
Zak R. 15.3.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2NteAjHR7fM> [SD1]
Zak R. 1.3.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nMAaZcRaw5U> [SD2]
Zak R. 4.3.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f3WHKNNz8BM> [SD3]
Zak R. 21.2.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-JrFXQ2WgYw> [SD4]
Zak R. 12.2.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=buyVpkadXSw> [SD5]
Zak R. 8.2.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HYZBgRInsmQ> [SD6]
Zak R. 15.3.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YKodwJDnCLk> [MH1]
Zak R. 5.3.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kXsjhvinOPQ> [MH2]
Zak R. 1.3.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26mYwRX7nus> [MH3]
Zak R. 21.2.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fikc1qMLAXg> [MH4]
Zak R. 12.2.2015 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XuEkghu9_wU [MH5]
Zak R. 8.2.2015 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zfNuZzAreuc> [MH6]

Appendix 2 Finnish Summary

Tämä Pro Gradu -tutkielma käsittelee sekä yhteistä maaperää että ennakko-olettamuksia urheiludiskurssissa. Materiaali koostuu 24 haastattelusta, jotka on kuvattu Englannin Valioliigaotteluiden jälkeen. Tavoitteena on selvittää, miten yhteistä maaperää rakennetaan ja hyödynnetään sekä millainen ennakko-olettamusten rooli on kysymystenasettelussa. Näkökulma on kiinnostava, sillä urheiludiskurssia on tutkittu melko vähän, varsinkin suhteessa tiettyjen urheilusarjojen globaaliin asemaan. Lähimpänä tämän tutkielman aihetta on kenties File (2018), joka tutki erään valioliigamanagerin imagonhallintaa ottelunjälkeisissä haastatteluissa. Tämä tutkielma koostuu määrällisestä tutkimuksesta, jossa haastattelujen jokainen puheenvuoro analysoidaan yhteisen maaperän näkökulmasta. Ennakko-olettamuksia taas tutkitaan sekä laadullisesti että määrällisesti, jotta niiden rooli voidaan selvittää mahdollisimman tarkasti.

Tutkimuksen kohteeksi valittiin Englannin Valioliiga, sillä se on taloudellisesti mitattuna maailman merkittävin jalkapallosarja. Nykyisen asemansa Valioliiga on saavuttanut järkevien ekonomisten päätösten kautta. Kun seurat ovat saaneet käyttöönsä enemmän rahaa, ne ovat pystyneet hankkimaan parempia pelaajia kaikkialta maailmasta, mikä puolestaan on lisännyt kansainvälistä kiinnostusta sarjaa kohtaan. 2010-luvulla sekä Valioliigan tv-oikeuksista että sponsorisopimuksista on tullut todella rahakkaita muihin jalkapallosarjoihin verrattuna. Valioliigan seuroille maksamat palkintorahat perustuvat sekä joukkueen sarjasijoitukseen että siihen, miten usein kukin joukkue on ollut esillä tv-ottelussa. Kun palkintorahoja verrataan Espanjan pääsarjaan, eron näkee selvästi. Kaudella 2018/2019 Espanjassa neljänneksi sijoittunut joukkue sai palkintona 57 miljoonaa puntaa, kun taas Englannissa vähiten tienannut joukkue ansaitsi 96 miljoonaa puntaa.

Tässä tutkielmassa tarkastellaan neljää valioliigamanageria, jotka olivat vastuussa joukkueidensa tuloksista kaudella 2014/2015. Kaikki tarkasteltavat managerit ovat brittiläisiä, sillä ei voida olla varmoja, miten hyvin englantia vieraana kielenä puhuvat henkilöt ymmärtävät esimerkiksi ennakko-olettamuksia. Toisaalta voidaan olettaa, että ei-brittiläistä manageria haastatellessa haastattelijan kieli on erilaista, puhumattakaan tilanteista, joissa haastattelu tapahtuu tulkin välityksellä. Kaudella 2014/2015 brittiläisten managerien määrä Valioliigassa oli suurempi kuin muuten 2010-luvulla, ja lisäksi britit johtivat seuroja sarjataulukon molemmista päistä. Toinen seikka, joka puoltaa edellä mainitun kauden haastattelujen tutkimista, on koko ottelunjälkeisen haastattelutapahtuman uudistaminen 2015 vuoden jälkeen. Tutkimissani haastatteluissa manageri ja haastatteliija keskustelevat kahdestaan. Haastattelut

ovat lyhytkestoisia ja siksi melko intensiivisiä. Tyypillisessä haastattelussa on 4-6 kysymystä ja ne kestävät noin 2-3 minuuttia. Nykyiset haastattelut ovat sen sijaan konferensseja, joissa on useita haastattelijoita. Ne ovat kestoltaan usein jopa 10 minuuttia ja ne on kuvattu kauempaa, jolloin tarkkojen sanamuotojen kuuleminen on haastavaa. Näiden seikkojen valossa uskon, että yhteisen maaperän tutkiminen on hedelmällisempää vanhemmissa haastatteluissa, joissa kaksi henkilöä on intensiivisessä vuorovaikutuksessa.

Teoria

Tutkielman teoria nojaa yhteisen maaperän osalta sekä Clarkin (1996) että Kecsesin & Zhangin (2013) määritelmiin. Clarkin määritelmä on perinteisempi ja se pohjautuu ajatukseen siitä, että kaikki keskustelu on yhteistä toimintaa (*joint activity*), jolla on tavoite. Toiminnan sisällä eri agenteilla on omat roolinsa, jotka tuovat erilaisia vastuita ja toisaalta johtavat erilaisiin ratkaisuihin. On tärkeää huomata, että Clarkin mallin mukaan keskustelu itsessään ei ole toiminnan tarkoitus, vaan sen sijaan vuorovaikutus tulee nähdä apuvälineenä varsinaisen päämäärän saavuttamisessa. Yhteisessä toiminnassa on useita tavoitteita ja erilaisia välivaiheita, jotka tulee suorittaa ennen kuin itse toiminnan päämäärä saavutetaan. Hyvä esimerkki tästä on ravintolassa syöminen, sillä ruoan saaminen vaatii monta välivaihetta. Vuorovaikutus on apuväline tavoitteen suorittamiselle, sillä tilaus tulee kommunikoida jollain tavalla tarjoilijalle, jotta se voidaan valmistaa. Clarkin mukaan yhteinen toiminta on hierarkkista, ja erilaiset tapahtumat luovat uusia tilanteita, jotka rakentuvat edellisten tilanteiden päälle. Toiminnan vaiheiden rakentuminen tapahtuu osallistujien yhteisessä maaperässä, mikä tekee yhteisen maaperän käsitteestä tärkeän Clarkin teorialle.

Kecses & Zhang lähestyvät vuorovaikutusta sosio-kognitiivisesta näkökulmasta, joka korostaa sekä yksilön vapautta että uniikkiutta. Jokainen yksilö tekee itsenäisiä päätöksiä, joihin vaikuttavat sekä yhteiskunnalliset seikat, kuten toiminnan relevanttius laajemmassa, yhteiskunnallisessa viitekehyksessä että yksilön aikaisemmat kokemukset samankaltaisista tilanteista. Siksi jokainen puhetilanne tulee analysoida huomioiden sekä kaikkien osallistujien aiemmat kokemukset että heille saatavilla olevan tiedon mahdollinen eroavuus. Tässä onkin suurin ero edellä esitettyjen teorioiden välillä: Clark mainitsee usein julkisen tiedon (*public knowledge*), mutta Kecsesin ja Zhangin tavoin hän ei korosta, että myös julkisesta tiedosta voidaan tehdä erilaisia johtopäätöksiä, jotka riippuvat eri henkilöiden kokemuksista ja tiedoista. Tähän perustuen Kecsesin & Zhangin käyttämä termi yksityinen konteksti (*private context*) on hyödyllinen, koska se kuvaa eroavaisuuksia yksilöiden tiedoissa, kokemuksissa ja ajattelussa.

Kezcskes ja Zhang jakavat yhteisen maaperän ydin- (*core*) ja emergentiksi (*emergent*) maaperäksi, joissa ydinmaaperään kuuluu yhteiskunnassa laajasti tiedostetut asiat, ja emergenttiin maaperään taas sijoitetaan esimerkiksi keskustelun aikana luotu yhteinen maaperä. Yhteinen emergentti maaperä on usein kytköksissä ydinmaaperään, joka suurimmaksi osaksi ohjaa yksilön ajattelua. Sosio-kognitiivisen mallin mukaisesti yhteinen maaperä voi olla vanhaa tietoa, joka aktivoidaan muistista, jaettua tietoa, jota haetaan ja ylläpidetään, tai uutta tietoa, jota luodaan vuorovaikutuksen aikana. Näistä kaksi ensimmäistä viittaa enemmän yhteiseen ydinmaaperään, kun taas uuden tiedon luominen tapahtuu yhteisessä emergentissä maaperässä.

Teoreettisen viitekehyksen toinen laajempi osuus käsittelee ennakko-olettamuksia, joiden tutkimusta ja tutkimuskehitystä tarkastellaan etenkin 1900-luvun loppupuolelta nykypäivään. Keskiössä ovat sekä Stalnakerin (2002) että Levinsonin (1983) ajatukset yhteisestä maaperästä ja sen suhteesta ennakko-olettamuksiin. Stalnakerin mallin mukaisesti yhteinen maaperä koostuu osallistujien jakamista ennakko-olettamuksista. Ennakko-olettamukset taas nähdään itsestäänselvyyksinä, jotka eivät kuulu ilmaisujen keskeiseen sisältöön. Sen sijaan niiden sisältämät merkitykset voidaan ymmärtää taustatietona, joka linkittyy tiettyihin sanoihin (*presupposition trigger*). Esimerkkinä edellä mainitusta ilmiöstä voidaan nähdä lause ”*China has stopped stockpiling metals*”, jossa sanan *stopped* merkitys paljastaa samalla, että metallien varastointi on loppunut, vaikka sitä on joskus tapahtunut. Vastaavanlaisten ennakko-olettamusten kautta kommunikointi muuttuu nopeammaksi ja tehokkaammaksi, kun osa informaatiosta voidaan välittää taustatietona.

Stalnakerin malli on tärkeä etenkin yhteisen maaperän tutkimukselle, mutta siihen on kohdistunut myös paljon kritiikkiä. Teoriaa leimaa eräänlainen dynaamisuuden puute: Stalnakerin mukaan puhujien uskomukset muodostuvat jaettujen olettamuksien kautta, minkä seurauksena hän väittää ennakko-olettamusten käytön rajoittuvan tilanteisiin, joissa ne perustuvat yhteisille uskomuksille. Abbott (2008) kritisoi Stalnakeria nimenomaan edellä mainitusta rajoittuneisuudesta. Hänen mukaansa Stalnakerin teorian tulisi huomioida konteksti, jolloin yhteiskunnallisen kontekstin sisältämät seikat voitaisiin nähdä yhteisinä uskomuksina. Stalnakerin teoriassa olevien aukkojen johdosta tutkielma tarkastelee yhteistä maaperää Clarkin ja Kezcsesin & Zhangin teorioiden mukaan. Stalnakerin teorialla on silti omat kiistämättömät vahvuutensa etenkin yhteisen maaperän ja ennakko-olettamusten linkittäjänä.

Tutkielma ei ota kantaa ennakko-olettamuksiin kielellisenä ilmiönä. Tästä johtuen teoreettinen viitekehys antaa runsaasti esimerkkejä erilaisista ennakko-olettamuksista, jotta niiden roolia voidaan tarkastella konkreettisena osana dataa, tässä tapauksessa

jalkapallohaastatteluja. Levinsonin yleiskatsauksen mukaan ennakko-olettamuksia on pyritty tutkimaan sekä semanttisten että pragmaattisten teorioiden näkökulmasta. Lähes kaikilla malleilla on kuitenkin omat ongelmansa, jotka kulminoituvat usein ennakko-olettamusten ennustettavuuteen (*projection problem*), tai häviämiseen (*defeasibility*). Tiivistettynä nämä kaksi ennakko-olettamusten ominaisuutta vaikeuttavat ratkaisevasti yleispätevien lausekkeiden laatimista, koska ennakko-olettamukset käyttäytyvät eri konteksteissa eri tavalla. Levinson ehdottaakin, että ennakko-olettamusten joukkoa kavennettaisiin, jotta saataisiin luotua kompaktimpi ja yhtenäisempi käsite, jota olisi helpompi tutkia.

Tutkielma sivuaa myös ennakko-olettamusten sopeutumista (*presupposition accommodation*). Lyhyesti esitettynä se tarkoittaa ominaisuutta, jonka mukaan ennakko-olettamuksia syntyy ilmaisujen tueksi niiden lausumishetkellä. Ominaisuus on tärkeä, sillä sen avulla pystytään perustelemaan myös tutkielman datassa esiintyviä ilmauksia. Ennakko-olettamusten sopeutumisen kannalta tärkeitä аспектеja ovat huomattavuus (*salience*) ja epämääräisyys (*vagueness*). Huomattavuus tarkoittaa, että puhehetkellä tärkein ja huomattavin objekti nousee taustatiedoksi, vaikka sitä ei erikseen mainittaisikaan. Esimerkiksi datassa *ottelu* viittaa yleensä otteluun, jonka jälkeen haastattelu pidetään, sillä se on huomattavin ja todennäköisesti puheena oleva ottelu. Epämääräisyys taas viittaa käsityksiin siitä, mikä on totta, tai tarpeeksi totta, jotta se voidaan hyväksyä. Esimerkiksi häviön jälkeen manageri voi hyväksyä, että hänen joukkueensa pelasi hyvin, ja samalla tiedostaa vastustajan pelanneen vielä paremmin, joka ikään kuin nostaa hyvyyden standardia, kuitenkin kumoamatta alkuperäistä väitettä. Ennakko-olettamusten sopeutumisen kautta pystytään yhtäältä tarkastelemaan mihin uskomuksiin erilaiset väitteet perustuvat, ja toisaalta, jakavatko osallistujat nämä uskomukset.

Kuten ennakko-olettamuksetkin, myös yhteiseen maaperään kuuluvat seikat voidaan haastaa. Erilaiset väitteet tulee ymmärtää ehdotuksina, jotka voidaan joko hyväksyä, hylätä, tai niistä voidaan neuvotella. Vaikka sekä Clark että Keczes & Zhang tiedostavat tämän, he eivät kuvaa prosessia enempää. Asher & Gillies (2003) nostavat sopeutumisen (*settledness*) ja korjaamisen (*correcting*) ratkaiseviksi termeiksi. Sopeutuminen viittaa puhujien asenteisiin esitettyä väitettä kohtaan, ja sopeutumisen tason mukaisesti väite voidaan joko hyväksyä tai sen sisältöä voidaan yrittää korjata. Korjaamista voitaneen pitää parempana vaihtoehtona hylkäämiseen verrattuna, sillä siinä osallistujien on mahdollista päästä molempia tyydyttävään lopputulokseen, jossa siis kumpikin sopeutuu väitteeseen.

Metodologia

Tutkielman data koostuu 24 haastattelusta, jotka BBC toteutti kaudella 2014/2015. BBC:n omat arkistot eivät kuitenkaan sisällä haastatteluja enää, joten niitä on tarkasteltu Youtuben välityksellä. Haastattelujen pituus vaihtelee kahden ja kolmen minuutin välillä. Puheenvuorojen määrä on kuitenkin haastattelujen kestoja tärkeämpi mittari, sillä jokainen puheenvuoro analysoidaan tutkimuksessa. Managerien puheenvuorojen kokonaismäärä oli 26-29, joten vaihtelun voidaan todeta olevan vähistä. Analyysi toteutettiin Microsoft Excelissä niin, että jokainen haastattelu muodosti rivin, jossa sarakkeet kuvasivat erilaisia kategorioita, joihin osallistujien puheenvuorot jaettiin. Sarakkeisiin kirjoitettiin myös muita hyödyllisiä tietoja, kuten muistiinpanoja haastattelujen tapahtumista, lähdeviitteet sekä koodi, jota käytetään esimerkkien merkitsemiseen itse tutkielmassa. Voitoille, häviöille sekä tasapeleille luotiin omat taulukot, jotta niissä esiintyvien tyyppien suhteet voitiin laskea helposti Excelin avulla. Tässä vaiheessa ei tehty litterointia, vaan se tehtiin suoraan tutkielman kirjoitusvaiheessa, kun esimerkkeihin viitattiin tutkimustekstissä.

Määrällinen tutkimus vastaa ensimmäiseen tutkimuskysymykseen eli siihen, miten yhteistä maaperää luodaan haastatteluissa. Lisäksi se vastaa osittain kolmanteen tutkimuskysymykseen, sillä kategorisoinnin avulla voidaan selvittää, miten usein ennakkoolettamuksia käytetään niin sanotuissa taka-ajatuksissa (*hidden agenda*): ja jos määrä on alhainen, se indikoi ennakkoolettamusten toimivan pääasiassa taustatietona. Toinen tutkimuskysymys, miten yhteistä maaperää hyödynnetään, on laadullinen, ja siihen vastataan erilaisten esimerkkien ja datassa toistuvien ilmiöiden kautta.

Määrällinen tutkimus toteutettiin kategorisoimalla sekä haastattelijoiden kysymykset että managerien vastaukset, jotta saatiin selville millaisia kysymykset ja vastaukset olivat, ja millainen niiden suhde yhteiseen maaperään oli. Haastattelijoiden kysymykset jaettiin *väitteisiin*, jotka ehdottivat yhteistä maaperää, *taka-ajatuksiin*, joissa ennakkoolettamusten kautta manageri pyrittiin saamaan myöntämään epäsuorasti jotain, ja *avoimiin kysymyksiin*, jotka väitteistä poiketen eivät vaatineet manageria ottamaan kantaa mihinkään.

Managerien vastaukset jaettiin samalla tavalla kolmeen kategoriaan, jotka ovat *hyväksyminen*, jossa yhteinen maaperä hyväksytään, *korjaus*, jossa haastattelijan väitettä muokataan sekä *kuvaileva vastaus*, joka kuvailee avoimesti tapahtumia. Kategoriat perustuvat sekä teoreettisessa viitekehyksessä esitettyihin ajatuksiin että pilottitutkimukseen, joka toteutettiin ennen analyysiä. Pilottitutkimuksen tehtävänä oli materiaalin määrän ja laadun varmistaminen sekä kategorioiden kokeileminen käytännössä. Kenties merkittävän

pilottitutkimuksen löydös oli managerien yhteisen maaperän *hylkäämistä* koskevan kategorian poistaminen, sillä managerit suosivat korjaamista hylkäämisen sijaan.

Tulokset

Tutkimuksessa analysoitiin yhteensä 109 kysymystä ja 109 vastausta. Kysymystyypeistä yleisin oli *väite* (n=68), toiseksi eniten oli *avoimia kysymyksiä* (n=34). *Taka-ajatuksia* käytettiin vain 7 kertaa. Managerien vastaukset korreloivat kysymystyyppien kanssa, sillä *hyväksymisten* (n=52) ja *korjausten* (n=16) summa vastaa *väitteiden* kokonaismäärää. Data sisälsi myös 41 *kuvailevaa vastausta*, jotka toimivat *avointen kysymysten* ja *taka-ajatusten* vastineina. Tulosten perusteella voidaan todeta, että yhteistä maaperää pyritään usein luomaan suoraan käyttämällä väitteitä, jotka joko hyväksytään tai korjataan, jonka jälkeen väitteistä tulee yhteistä maaperää. Avointen kysymysten kautta puolestaan pystytään tunnustelemaan yhteistä maaperää, sillä kuvailevat vastaukset luovat sitä automaattisesti, minkä jälkeen haastattelijat pystyvät esittämään saamansa tiedon perusteella tarkempia väitteitä. Datan jakaminen voittoihin, häviöihin ja tasapeleihin paljastaa, että etenkin tasapelien jälkeen yhteistä maaperää on vaikeampi luoda, koska managerien asennoituminen ottelun lopputulokseen saattaa olla epäselvä. Tähän viittaa sekä väitteiden prosentuaalisesti alhaisempi määrä että korjausten suhteellisesti suurempi osuus.

Vastauksena toiseen tutkimuskysymykseen, miten yhteistä maaperää hyödynnetään haastatteluissa, voidaan löytää kaksi hieman erilaista vastausta. Ensimmäinen tapa perustuu Kezckesin & Zhangin (2013) ajatuksiin siitä, että yhteinen maaperä voi olla vanhaa tietoa, joka aktivoidaan muistista, jaettua tietoa, jota haetaan ja ylläpidetään, tai uutta tietoa, jota luodaan vuorovaikutuksen aikana. Haastattelijoiden kysymyksissä käytetään usein joko viittauksia vanhaan tietoon, joka aktivoituu, kun kysymys esitetään, tai toisaalta jaettuun tietoon, jota pyritään hakemaan. Managerin vastaus osoittaa, onko yhteisen maaperän luominen onnistunut, ja samalla vastaus voi sisältää myös uutta tietoa. On kuitenkin harvinaisempaa, että haastattelijan kysymys sisältäisi väitteitä, joiden kautta pyrittäisiin luomaan suoraan uutta tietoa. Yleisin tapa, jolla uutta tietoa luodaan, on managerien vastaukset avoimiin kysymyksiin. Haastatteluissa näkyy myös ydinmaaperän ja emergentin maaperän suhde, sillä haastattelijoiden kysymyksissä on usein viittauksia tietoon, jonka voidaan katsoa kuuluvan ydinmaaperään, kun taas vastauksissa luotava tieto on pääosin emergenttiä, pois lukien vastaukset, joissa ydinmaaperään kuuluva tieto vain vahvistetaan hyväksymisen kautta. Edellä kuvailtu tapa hyödyntää yhteistä maaperää on sidoksissa yksittäisiin ilmauksiin ja puheenvuoroihin. Seuraavaksi esiteltävä sen sijaan taas koskee kokonaisia haastatteluja.

Clarkin ajatuksiin perustuen yhteinen maaperä kasautuu, jolloin jokainen tapahtuma rakentuu edellisen päälle. Haastatteluissa tätä seikkaa hyödynnetään laajalti kysymysten aiheissa. Tämä havaitaan etenkin silloin, kun manageri ei vastaa kunnolla haastattelijan esittämään kysymykseen. Jatkokysymyksen sijaan haastattelija tyytyy useimmiten vaihtamaan aihetta. Toisin sanoen managerin puutteellinen vastaus kysymykseen luo uuden yhteisen maaperän tason, jossa kyseinen aihe ei ole enää keskusteltavissa, ja tulevat kysymykset koskevat muita aiheita. Vastaavasti managerien eri aiheita käsittelevät pitkät kuvailevat vastaukset indikoivat, että näistä aiheista on mahdollista kysyä jatkokysymyksiä, koska aloite keskustella kyseisestä aiheesta tuli managerilta. Managerien vastaukset siis luovat samanaikaisesti yhteistä maaperää sekä sisällöllisesti että haastattelun tasolla.

Sopeutuminen (*settledness*) on myös erittäin suuressa roolissa datassa. Sen ilmentyminen on poikkeavaa, sillä sopeutumisen voidaan katsoa koskevan ainoastaan managereita. Havainto perustuu siihen, että toisin kuin keskusteluissa yleensä, haastattelijat eivät puolusta omia väitteitään, vaan niiden hyväksyminen yhteiseen maaperään tapahtuu pelkästään managerien kautta. Aineistossa korjauksille ei esitetä vastakorjauksia, eikä haastattelijoiden väitteitä pyritä perustelemaan millään tavalla, jos ne korjataan. Uskon tämän johtuvan osittain haastattelujen lyhyestä kestosta, joka asettaa monia rajoitteita kysymyksenasettelulle. Haastattelijan tavoitteena on saada mahdollisimman paljon relevantteja kommentteja managerilta, eikä väitteiden puolustaminen tai korjausten korjaaminen tue tätä tavoitetta. Managerien asema taas velvoittaa heitä tiukempaan linjaan, eivätkä he voi antaa epäsoivia kommentteja toimiessaan valioliigaseuran puhemiehinä. Toisin sanoen sopeutumisen yksipuolisuus on melko loogista, kun sitä peilataan kontekstiin. Haastattelijoiden väitteet sisältävät myös melko paljon kielellisiä elementtejä, jotka ilmaisevat kyseessä olevan ennemminkin ehdotus, kuin suoranainen väite, esimerkiksi "*were they too hard perhaps*", on selvä osoitus siitä, että haastattelijan ehdotus odottaa vahvistusta, sillä kyseinen ilmaisu on esitetty käännteistä sanajärjestystä käyttäen ja sen merkitystä on pehmennetty myös *perhaps* -sanalla. Voidaan siis todeta, että molemmat osapuolet ovat tietoisia siitä, että yhteisen maaperän vahvistaminen tapahtuu aina managerin toimesta.

Ennakko-olettamusten rooli datassa on omien hypoteesieni vastaisesti melko traditionaalinen, ja sitä käytetään *taka-ajatuksissa* melko harvoin. Datasta voidaan nostaa esiin tilanteita, joissa taka-ajatuksiin perustuvia kysymyksiä olisi voitu esittää, mutta niiden sijaan haastattelija on käyttänyt väitteitä. Esimerkkeinä tällaisista tilanteista ovat jalkapallomaailman herkäät aiheet, kuten mahdolliset pelaajasiirrot ja tuomaritoiminta. Sen sijaan taka-ajatuksia käytettiin melko harmittomien aiheiden, kuten taktisten muutosten yhteydessä. Voidaankin

todeta, että haastattelijat pitävät väitteitä turvallisempana tapana kysyä kysymyksiä ja tietynlainen läpinäkyvyys nähdään tavoiteltavana piirteenä. On myös otettava huomioon, että kommentit, jotka perustuvat haastattelijan taka-ajatuksiin on helppo kumota jälkeenpäin.

Ennakko-olettamusten traditionaalisempi rooli puolestaan perustuu Levinsonin (1983) esittämiin teorioihin, joiden mukaan ennakko-olettamuksilla pyritään välittämään itsestään selvää tietoa. On huomattava, että vaikka ennakko-olettamukset eivät näyttäydykään määrällisessä tutkimuksessa keskeisessä osassa, niillä on erittäin tärkeä rooli haastattelujen dynamiikassa. Ne mahdollistavat intensiivisen ja nopean dialogin, joka on avainasemassa siinä, että muutaman minuutin aikana pystytään käsittelemään suhteellisen kattavasti useita aiheita. Ennakko-olettamusten mukautumisen sääntöjen perusteella pystytään selkeästi osoittamaan, minkälaista tietoa olettamukset pitävät sisällään.

Lopuksi

Tiivistettynä voi todeta, että yhteistä maaperää luodaan pääasiassa väitteiden kautta, mutta myös avoimet kysymykset ovat yleinen tapa. Yhteistä maaperää hyödynnetään sekä vanhan että jaetun tiedon muodossa, ja kumpaankin viitataan usein kysymyksenasettelussa. Yhteinen maaperä näkyy haastattelujen aihevalinnoissa, sillä sen rakentumisen kautta haastattelijat saavat tietoa aiheiden mieluisuudesta haastateltaville. Ennakko-olettamusten rooli on melko traditionaalinen, mutta ne ovat haastattelujen dynamiikan kannalta erittäin tärkeitä.

Tutkimus tarjoaa yleiskäsityksiä siitä, miten yhteinen maaperä ja ennakko-olettamukset toimivat urheiludiskurssissa. Urheiludiskurssia tulisi kuitenkin tutkia myös laajemmasta näkökulmasta, jotta sen ominaisuuksia pystyttäisiin hahmottamaan tarkemmin ja kattavammin. Esimerkiksi haastattelijan roolia ja valtaa lyhyissä haastatteluissa olisi tarpeen tutkia, jotta voitaisiin selvittää, muodostaako tämän tutkimuksen data enemmänkin säännön vai poikkeuksen. Samoin taka-ajatusten roolia kysymystenasettelussa olisi tärkeää tutkia lähemmin vaikkapa poliittisissa haastatteluissa. Lisäksi olisi mielenkiintoista perehtyä haastattelijoiden kysymyksenasetteluun tarkemmin konsultoimalla heitä suoraan, jotta erilaisista strategioista ja valinnoista voitaisiin saada relevanttia tietoa.